Letters of EUGENE V. DEBS

VOLUME 3 1919-1926

Edited by J. Robert Constantine

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Contents

Illustrations

Symbols and Abbreviations

Repository Symbols

CaOOA	Public Archives of Canada, Ottawa, Labour Archives
CLobs	California State University, Long Beach
CLSU	University of Southern California, Los Angeles
CLU	University of California, Los Angeles
CSmH	Huntington Library, San Marino, Calif.
CSt	Stanford University, Archives
CSt-H	Stanford University, Hoover Institution on War, Revolution, and Peace
CtU	University of Connecticut, Storrs
CtY	Yale University, New Haven, Conn.
CU	University of California, Berkeley
DCU	Catholic University of America
DLC	Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
DNA	National Archives, Washington, D.C.
DebsH	Debs Foundation, Debs Home, Terre Haute, Ind.
IaH	State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City
IaU	University of Iowa, Iowa City
ICarbS	Southern Illinois University, Carbondale
ICIU	University of Illinois, Chicago
ICN	Newberry Library, Chicago
IHi	Illinois State Historical Library, Springfield
ILGWU	International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, Archives, New York City
In	Indiana State Library, Indianapolis
InGrD	DePauw University, Greencastle, Ind.
InH	Indiana Historical Society, Indianapolis
InTI	Indiana State University, Terre Haute
InU	Indiana University, Bloomington, Lilly Library
IGR	Knox College, Galesburg, Ill.
IU	University of Illinois, Champaign
KPT	Pittsburg State University, Pittsburg, Kans.
KU	University of Kansas, Lawrence

MH	Harvard University, Houghton Library, Cambridge, Mass.
MHi	Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston
MiDW	Wayne State University, Detroit, Mich., Reuther Library
MiU	University of Michigan, Ann Arbor
MnHi	Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul
MoH	Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis
MoU	University of Missouri, Columbia
NcD	Duke University, Durham, N.C.
NhD	Dartmouth College, Hanover, N.H.
NIC	Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y., Labor-Management Documentation Center
NjP	Princeton University, Princeton, N.J., Seeley G. Mudd Manuscript Library
NN Kars	New York Public Library, Karsner Collection
NNC	Columbia University, New York City
NNU Tam	New York University, Tamiment Library
NNWML	Wagner College, Staten Island, N.Y.
NRAB	American Baptist Historical Society, Rochester, N.Y.
NNYI	YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, New York City
NRU	University of Rochester, Rochester, N.Y.
NSyU	Syracuse University, Syracuse, N.Y.
OT	Toledo-Lucas County Public Library
OClWHi	Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland, Ohio
PHi	Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia
PST	Pennsylvania State University, University Park
PU	University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia
TxArU	University of Texas, Arlington
TxLT	Texas Tech University, Lubbock
TxU	University of Texas, Austin, Barker Texas History Center
WHi	Wisconsin State Historical Society, Madison
WM	Milwaukee Public Library

Document Symbols

A	Autograph
AL	Autograph letter, not signed or signature missing
ALc	Autograph letter, copy
ALS	Autograph letter, signed
AN	Autograph note, not signed
ANS	Autograph note, signed
AS	Autograph, signed
EVD	Eugene Victor Debs
MS(S)	Manuscript(s)

PLS	Printed form letter, signed
T	Typed
Tc	Transcript copy
TDc	Typed document, copy
TDS	Typed document, signed
TL	Typed letter, not signed
TLc	Typed letter, copy
TLS	Typed letter, signed
TLSc	Typed letter, signed copy
TS	Typed, signed
(Y)	Initial of Bart Young, Debs's secretary

Letters

1919-1926

EVD to Theodore Debs[1]

[1919-1921]
Atlanta, Georgia

Please write him a nice appreciative little letter. He was my cell-mate the first two months I was here. He used to make up my bed, wash out my handkerchief, hose etc., & gave me the best of everything. He was kind to me in every way he knew how and I love him and wish him to know that I shall not forget him. He is a thoroughly fine fellow. Tell him I remember having the picture taken here to which he refers but that I have not seen it. I am very glad he is doing well and hope he may do better. Give him my love & best wishes and tell him I shall be more than glad to see him again.

AN, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. During his two and one-half years of imprisonment in the Atlanta Federal Penitentiary, Debs regularly sent to his brother, Theodore, notes written on used envelopes, letter margins, scraps of paper, etc., instructing Theodore to reply to letters Debs had received in prison. Occasionally, as in this instance, the letter to which Theodore is instructed to reply has not been found and the correspondent's name remains unknown.

EVD to Theodore Debs

[1919-1921]
Atlanta, Georgia

Special Report on 9653[1]

Strength of a Lion; Toughness of a Bear; Endurance of a Donkey; Agility of a Panther; Playfulness of a Monkey—Eats like an Alligator; Digests like a Goat; Sleeps like a Groundhog; Sings like an Oriole; Looks like a Section Man, and feels like a god!

Ye canna beat it!

AN, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Debs's prisoner number.

Helen M. Boardman[1] to Theodore Debs

[1919-1921]
New York City

My dear Mr. Debs,

Thank you for your very kind letter and the message from your brother in regard to Samuel Moore.[2] I hope you can convey to him that his statement is of the greatest value in this case. Miss Gruening and I were absolutely convinced of Sam's sanity, of his unusual character and intelligence. We are, however, constantly meeting wild statements to the effect that he is criminally insane. You can see how important is this testimony from one who knows Sam well, and of course whose own integrity even the Department of Justice is convinced.

A recent letter from Mr. Zerbst[3] to a friend of mine contained the statement that Comrade 'Gene was the only man he ever knew who actually *lived* the teachings of Christ. In the face of that it seems impossible that he will remain in Atlanta much longer. We are all, of course, eagerly looking for his early release.

Thanking you again for your very great help, I am,

Faithfully yours,
Helen M. Boardman

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. In an advertisment in the *Liberator* of May 1919, Helen Boardman and Martha Gruening were listed as proprietors of Mill House, "an international school for the children of radicals," in Marlborough, New York. Both women were arrested on disorderly-conduct charges during World War I for "sticking anti-conscription buttons and posters to American flags" in New York City. *New York Times*, April 25, 1917; June 3, 1917.

2. Samuel Moore was a black prisoner who was befriended by Debs and for whose release Debs worked following his own release from prison. In June 1927, when Moore's release was finally secured, he was fifty-seven years old and had spent thirty-seven years in prison for killing a white man. *American Appeal*, June 25, 1927.

3. Frederick G. Zerbst, warden at the Atlanta Federal Penitentiary.

EVD to Otto Branstetter

November 22, [1919-1921]
Atlanta, Georgia

My dear Otto:

Some days ago you were kind enough to invite suggestions from me to the N.E.C. at its next meeting in regard to the campaign of

the party for the release of war prisoners,[1] and I now take the liberty to briefly offer my views upon the subject. You understand, of course, that I am opposed to any further petition or request for release so far as I am personally concerned. But this is aside from the general question of amnesty with which the party has to deal as an issue of vital concern to its membership, not only because of those imprisoned but, what is of far more consequence, because of the principles involved which effect not only the fundamental right of free speech but the very right of our party to exist and carry on its propaganda.

Now let me get directly to the point at once. The amnesty campaign is a part of the general fight {we are waging} for our constitutional right to organized life.

Let us then, first of all, place our party in a fighting attitude in regard to it!

No more "Respectfully praying your honorable Body"; no more "humbly petitioning your excellency"; no more catering or Kowtowing to the autocratic power at Washington that has treated every request our friends and comrades have made with insolent contempt.

Let us no longer petition but *demand;* no longer bow to the powers that be but stand erect and fling our challenge into their teeth.

That is my idea of what our attitude and policy should be, and it will awaken the people like a bugle blast and rally thousands to our standards and in our fight for the elementary rights of human beings as well as our constitutional rights as American citizens.

And in pursuance of this policy I beg to recommend to the N.E.C. that it adopt and give to the associated press for publication a short series of *Demands* with a *Capital D.* and that these demands be made in such bold, challenging and defiant terms that they will startle the natives and put the militant spirit into everything on two legs that has a drop of red blood in it.

Meekness and polite petitioning have brought us only contempt and gotten us nowhere. Let us now {stand} straight up with fire in our eyes and face the insolent and brutal power that has robbed us of our rights and fight like men for what is ours and what we propose to have at whatever cost.

This series of demands need not be long but it should bristle like gleaming bayonets.

For example:

We reassert the fundamental principles of liberty embodied in the Declaration of Independence.

We demand the restoration of the Constitution of the United States.

We demand the immediate repeal of all war time laws, especially the

unspeakably vile and infamous espionage law, which Russianized America and disgraced its flag.

We demand the unconditional abolition of all war time powers and the restoration of representative government.

We demand the immediate release of all war time prisoners.

We demand the immediate declaration of peace with the nations with which the government has been at war.

We demand the immediate restoration of the fundamental American rights of free speech, free press and free assemblage and we denounce the brutal and lawless interference therewith and hereby declare that we shall resist the same by any means that may be necessary to protect our consitutional rights as American citizens.

Too long have we tamely submitted to the encroachments of Wall Street's autocracy upon our lawful rights and now the time has come to stand up and assert ourselves and we would be cowardly recreants unworthy to be known as men if we failed to do it.

Upon these fundamental issues which involve the constitutional rights dear to us all we make our appeal to the American people in behalf of the Socialist Party, the only political party in America that throws down the gauntlet to the Wall street brigands that rule and loot this nation; the only Party that stands four square for the emancipation of the workers {and} the freedom of the people under real democracy and self-government.

This is but an outline and crudely done but is respectfully submitted to my comrades of the N.E.C. as my view of {what} our party attitudes should be, for such consideration as they may see fit to bestow upon it.[2]

AL, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Both before and after the end of the war in November 1918 a number of groups, ranging from the National Civil Liberties Bureau to the Workers Defense League and the AFL, protested the imprisonment and sought the release of hundreds of men and women convicted of violating the Espionage Act of 1917 and the Sedition Act of 1918, which provided stiff fines and prison terms for interference with the war effort for anyone who should "utter, print, write, or publish any disloyal, profane, scurrilous, or abusive language" about the flag, the armed forces or their uniforms, the Constitution, or the form of government of the United States. State legislation and local ordinances spread wider the net for catching radicals, the major achievement of the Red Scare of 1919-20. The Socialist party intensified its efforts to secure the release of "political prisoners" following Debs's imprisonment in April 1919, and the "amnesty campaign" became an important part of its activities during the next two and a half years. Predictably, there was a split within the party and between the party and other amnesty groups involving those who sought the immediate release of Debs as a means of securing the eventual release of all the prisoners and those who insisted that the simultaneous release of all political prisoners, including Debs, should be the

movement's goal. Despite their strategic differences, the movement's leaders were able to organize a massive outpouring of public support for Debs's release, joined not only by socialists but by many others who had doubts about his conviction in the first place and were offended by the prospect of keeping an aging and ailing man in prison for years after the war had ended. In time, even Debs's old enemy Samuel Gompers joined in the demand for his release, and a member of Gompers's staff, Lucy Robins, was one of the most tireless workers in the amnesty movement.

2. In a statement published in *Socialist World* (August 1920), Debs noted "press dispatches" saying that the national executive committee "decided to renew the appeal in my behalf to President Wilson" and declared that "while I appreciate fully the good intention of the committee, I object emphatically to any further appeal being made for me to the present occupant of the White House. I have nothing to ask at the hands of the Wilson—Palmer—Burleson administration."

Joseph M. Coldwell to EVD

[1919-1921]
Atlanta, Georgia

My Dear Gene,

This bottle of "Malted Milk" was sent to me last Christmas. I have been keeping it for an emergency. That emergency has come, you are sick and we cannot afford to have you take too many chances, I feel sure that the Comrade who sent this milk to me would be delighted to know that you used it. I insist that you accept it and use it. There is only one condition, which is, that *you use it yourself* and not try to feed the entire hospital.

Fraternally
10.057

[EVD reply to Theodore Debs]

This came with a large bottle of Malted Milk and expresses the quintessence of comradely love and kindness which means more here among "convicts" than anywhere else on earth. The sender made the excuse that I was "sick" for fear I would send it back. I am feeling better than at any time since I've been here.

AL, InTI, Debs Collection.

EVD to Mabel Dunlap Curry

[1919-1921]
Atlanta, Georgia

Most dearly beloved, Tuesday 17th

There are no bounds to patience or endurance or my finish would have been reached long ago. My heart has cried out and I have stilled it with promises until they can deceive no more. And yet we must possess ourselves and learn still further how to wait and cultivate the virtues of the saints, Oh, Juno,[1] do you know, can you know how I long to see you, to be with you, to hear your voice and look into your eyes once more! How I yearn to take you in my arms and tell you what a beautiful, wonderful soul you are and how I love and adore you! Yes, dearest, I know you know, for I can hear your {aching} heart-beats and your cry of loneliness, and I reach out for you as if I can draw you across the intervening spaces and have you with me in happy reunion and loving companionship. No words can ever tell how infinitely precious you are to me, what wondrous vistas you have opened to my vision, and what rare loveliness and beauty have been revealed to me in the pure light of your great white soul. You are all the world to me, most blessed one, soul of my soul, and in the radiance of your beautiful spirit there glow the divinest realities of life. I love you, dearest one, in all tenderness and reverence and with the passionate devotion of my soul.

May this find you brave as you are sweet and strong as you are true. My love to you, my blessed one, with all my heart!

Yours now and always
Ura

ALS, InU, Lilly Library, Curry Papers.

1. As noted, in his letters to Mabel Curry, Debs regularly addressed her as Juno and used Ura (a reversal of the American Railway Union initials) as his signature.

EVD to Mabel Dunlap Curry

[1919-1921]
Atlanta, Georgia

My own best beloved, Tuesday 5th

A chance this morning for a hurried word to my precious love and oh, that it might tell you just a little of what my heart is so full of.

You are so very beautiful and so very near to me this morning, and how longingly I reach for you that I may hold you in my arms and tell you how rich your wonderful love has made me and how much of the real beauty and promise of life I now know that was a sealed book to me before. You have been an unceasing inspiration to me since first I came to know you and especially during the period that tested our faith and love, and no words can ever tell of the gratitude and reverence that my heart holds for you. God bless you, my dear little Woman, and make you happy in the measure of the pain your tender heart has made you suffer for the poor and friendless to whom you have ever been a blessed providence! My heart so often throbs in aches when I think of how tenderly sensitive you are to all the suffering in the world and what agony you have endured because you feel the sorrow and woe and injustice of others more than you do your own.

These days are interminably long to you, I know, as they are to me. One instant you are so near that I can feel the glow of your presence and hear your sweet voice and the next you are worlds away from me and I wonder and wonder if I shall ever see you again. But always the comforting thought is with me that you love me and I love you, and that such love is immortal. Heaven is love and nothing else! Our love would {make} a heaven of hell itself. I greet you this morning, my beloved, with my heart in my hands. Your radiance and loveliness light up the intervening spaces, and I am on my knees before your beautiful soul. How very wonderful is love and how potent in shaping our lives! The thought of you quickens all my higher impulses and attunes my soul to the loftiest ideals. You personify all that is sweetest, purest and noblest in Womanhood. And you are so wonderful intellectually, and you have such moral courage and vision, and such sparkling wit! Oh, I adore you, dearest! Can you realize how passionately I love you, and how I reverence your divinely beautiful and glorious Womanhood!

My arms are about you, my precious love, and my kisses are on your dear lips, and I am with all my heart

Yours eternally,
Ura

ALS, InU, Lilly Library, Curry Papers.

EVD to Mabel Dunlap Curry

[1919-1921]
Atlanta, Georgia

My own Dearest, Tuesday 5th

There is nothing I can say that would in the least express the feelings that surge in me this morning. I want you, my beloved, and the cry of my heart will not be silenced. You are more to me and more pressingly needed than ever before. What would my life be without you? I dare not think of it. I dare not! It is unthinkable—it would drive me mad. Last night in my loneliness I almost cried aloud for you—my heart-hunger was so acute I felt I could not bear it. Oh, you dear, sweet, wonderful Woman, how the thought of you thrills me, lifts me up, exalts and inspires me! You grow more beautiful, more lovable, and more irresistible every day. You are so richly gifted in all there is of beauty and nobility in Womanhood and so wondrously endowed with the power to charm and fascinate all who come near you. What sweet and happy hours you have brought into my life since I came under the spell of your witchery! How could I help but love you with all my heart and thrill at the sound of your voice, the glance of your eyes, the touch of your hand! Oh, the infinite beauty and power and torment of love! It is as imperious as a god and as ruthless as a demon. True love, the grand passion, the divine rapture—who does not know it with all its attendant conditions, its price in pain and penalty, and its ineffable ecstacy and enchantment knows but the husk of life and naught of its infinite beauty and glory. No words can ever express my love for you. It throbs in my heart and surges in my soul. How sweet and beautiful you are! How great in soul, how tender in heart, and how noble in everything! And how I adore you! You are my own precious love, my arms reach for you, I long for you unceasingly, and am always, always,

Yours in deathless devotion,
Ura

ALS, InU, Lilly Library, Curry Papers.

EVD to Mabel Dunlap Curry

[1919-1921]
Atlanta, Georgia

My own Beloved, Monday 27th

It was indeed a keen disappointment. I had firmly resolved that I could endure it no longer. You simply had to come and I was counting the minutes and listening for your footsteps. How cruel the fates are in ruthlessly destroying our most cherished plans and dreams! And yet it sometimes happens that what seemed a cruelty to us proved to have been a blessed kindness. I am already partially reconciled. Had you come you would now be gone. As it is you are yet to come, and it is to be soon, and no disappointment this time. If there is any more failure to connect I shall break away from here and go to you wherever you are, for I must see you, my loved one, without any further delay, to save my sanity. You are ever with me in spirit, I know, for I am in some strange way made conscious of your presence and I can almost literally hear your merry voice as you stand smiling before me with extended hand, saying, "Gimme my nickel." Oh, how I long to see you, my precious love, and put my arms about you and tell you once again that you are mine, that I love and adore you with my whole heart, and that the thought of you and of your radiant spirit and beautiful soul is my unceasing inspiration. You are God's own ideal Woman—beauty of soul and soul of beauty! You perfectly charm and fascinate me by your sweet grace and wondrous personality. You are in my soul and in my dreams. How [one word illegible] when I would tell you how infinitely beautiful you are and what a great and mastering love you have inspired in me. My heart cries aloud for you and will not be denied. Oh, the marvellous and irresistible power of love! I hold you in my arms, my dearest one, and love and bless you with all my heart.

Your own adoring
Ura

ALS, InU, Lilly Library, Curry Papers.

EVD to Theodore Debs

[1919-1921]
Atlanta, Georgia

My dearest old Pard: Wednesday PM

Your breezy & chipper little note is at hand—also two perfectly cheering letters from Kate, showing her to be contented & happy & that fills my cup and puts joy in all my veins. All I ask is that the dear ones *at home shall be happy.* That's all. The rest I can stand. Nothing else can [one word illegible] me. And there's *no reason on earth* why you should not all be happy & keep so. Never mind what anybody else says or does. See each other often & talk cheer & hope & joy. Why not? Kate tells me in all her letters how very sweet you & Gertrude & Marguerite are to her & Grandma[1] & how she loves you all—& that fills me with rapture & gratefulness. Don't worry about me *on any account.* I know myself & I know my ground & am absolutely sure of it. I'm true to the best I know—my conscience is clear, my soul serene & I'm confident in the future & *unafraid.* No, *you did not* send me "Class Struggle" for May nor any pamphlets from Lore.[2]

I'm piping like a lark to know that you are entirely up with the mail—everything cleaned up. Bravo!

I've thought of you & the mail many a time & I know you've had a tough tussle with it. It's a load off my mind to know that the decks are at last clear. No hour passes that I don't think of you & dear Gertrude & Marguerite—Give them my love & kisses. Their sweet devotion is a source of never failing comfort & strength to me.

Always yours in deathless love
Gene

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Theodore Debs's wife, Gertrude, and daughter, Marguerite, and Katherine Debs's mother, Katherine Stuber Baur.

2. Ludwig Lore's "Eugene V. Debs, a Revolutionist" appeared in the May 1919 issue of *Class Struggle,* of which Lore, Debs, and Louis Fraina were listed as editors.

EVD to Theodore Debs

[1919-1921]
Atlanta, Georgia

Sunday afternoon 20th

The boys are in the chapel this afternoon to see "Camille"—"La Dame aux Camellie!", par le Dumas fils,[1] to put it in French. I did not go. I was absorbed in my letters until too late, and besides, my mood was not needing the particular kind of accentuation that pathetic story would have given it. Thirty-seven years ago I saw Bernhardt[2] in Camille—and I have seen her *vividly* ever since. She did not play Camille—she *was* Camille. I wish I could tell you what that marvellous impersonation by the stage's greatest genius left with me. I am sure it had a marked influence in shaping my future, especially my attitude toward woman, and more especially toward what the world is pleased to call the "fallen" woman. There is not one so low or so vile on the face of the earth that I would not put my arms about her as I would my Mother or my sister, and minister to her lovingly, and stand by her against the world.

Bernhardt as Camille! Well does the great actress know that without her genius she would *be* Camille off instead of on the mimic stage. I was young when I saw Bernhardt in Camille but not too young to be thrilled, overpowered, carried away, and everlastingly impressed by her supreme art. All the gods must have joined in the divine gift they laid upon her altar—Frank Harris says Eleanore Duse[3] is still a greater Camille than Bernhardt. I can't imagine it. Bernhardt's greatness on the stage is beyond my capacity—my wings are folded and at rest before her limits are reached. I have seen two great actors, two supreme artists of the stage-world, Bernhardt in Camille and Booth[4] in Iago, and my little gallery will be vivid with their pictures, their personalities, and their performances forever.

AL, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Alexandre Dumas (1824-95) published *The Lady of the Camellias* as a novel in 1848 and adapted it for the stage in 1852. An immediate success, the play remained one of the most popular of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

2. Sarah Bernhardt (Henriette Rosine Bernard, 1844-1923), a legendary French actress who is considered to be one of the greatest actresses of all time and who traveled all over the world during her long career. *Camille* was generally considered to be her greatest role.

3. Eleonora Duse (1858-1924), an Italian actress who, like Bernhardt, gained world fame, chiefly for her roles in the plays of Henrik Ibsen. Duse died while on tour in the United States.

4. Edwin Thomas Booth (1833-93) overcame the public's hatred of his younger

brother, John Wilkes Booth, to become one of the nation's leading actors. Over the years he alternated the title role and that of Iago in *Othello*.

EVD to Theodore Debs

[1919-1921]
Atlanta, Georgia

Theo:

I have just recd. two fine {autographed} pictures of Georges Carpentier,[1] the French champion, one in ring costume and one in street dress. These were sent by our mutual friend, Jack Curley,[2] and let me say to you that Jack is a royal fine fellow and our staunch friend. He remembers you with particular fondness. His address is *Jack Curley 117 W. 46th St. New York City.* Pls. write him and thank him for the pictures and the flattering inscriptions and ask him to extend my hearty thanks & best wishes to Carpentier who is a real gentleman and a thoroughly fine fellow. Tell Jack I am delighted with the pictures and shall cherish them as precious souvenirs. Tell him I shall always remember their visit here and that I wish them both a thousand prosperities and hope to meet them again.

AN, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Georges ("Orchid Man") Carpentier was born in Lens, France, in 1894. As a boxer he fought in every division, and during the years of Debs's imprisonment he won the light heavyweight title against Battling Levinsky (October 12, 1920) and lost a heavyweight title fight against Jack Dempsey (July 2, 1921), the latter in the first million-dollar gate in boxing.

2. Born Jacques Armand Schuel of Alsatian parents living in San Francisco, Jack Curley (1876-1937) was one of the most colorful and at times successful promoters of his time. During a forty-year career he managed a variety of performers, ranging from boxers to the Vatican Choir and Rudolph Valentino. His promotion of the prize fights of Jack Johnson, Jess Willard, Jack Dempsey, and Carpentier resulted in unprecedented press coverage and gates.

Michael Gold[1] to EVD

[1919-1921]
New York City

Dear Comrade 'Gene—

We are having a tough time making ends meet. I guess you have read of our financial troubles. Would you send us a New Year's message

in which you say what the Liberator[2] means to you? It would help us a lot I think—people always forget what a blow it would be should the Liberator go out of business—they take it for granted, & don't realize it is mortal & human.

The paper is reorganized—it is now owned and managed by the cooperative group of editors—of whom Max Eastman[3] is one. He will contribute but has passed over the financial résponsibilities & cares to the bunch.

We hope you are as brave as ever 'Gene & we hope you can come out soon. You are a great figure in jail—an immortal figure of influence & saintliness but we need you more outside now. The Socialist Party seems to have committed hari-kari[4]—& you are needed to express its finest side in the new realignment of the radical forces so near & necessary in America.

With love from us all
Michael Gold
for The Liberator Editors

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Michael Gold (1894-1967) served as a copyreader on the *New York Call* before joining the staff of *Masses* and, following its suppression, the *Liberator*, on whose letterhead this letter was written. Following the Communist party and Communist Labor party split from the Socialist party in 1919, Gold joined the Communists and became a leading contributor to the *Worker* and later the *Daily Worker*. His novel *Jews Without Money* (1930) was a powerful study of the Jews of New York's ghetto.

2. The *Liberator* was launched in March 1918 following the suppression of *Masses* and the two sedition trials of *Masses* staff members Max Eastman, Floyd Dell, Art Young, and John Reed, against whom the indictments were dropped by the government after their second trial. Debs was listed as a contributing editor, and his "Message to the Liberator" was published in its April 1919 issue.

3. Eastman, Floyd Dell, Claude McKay, and Robert Minor were listed as editors of the *Liberator*.

4. At the end of August and in early September 1919, left-wing elements of the Socialist party, discontented with the party's conservative stance, its expulsion of the language federations and the Michigan and other state organizations for alleged violations of the party's constitution, and its rejection of the results of the party's 1919 referendum for national executive committee seats, bolted a party emergency convention in Chicago and organized two new parties, the Communist Labor party and the Communist party. In 1920 a unity convention in Bridgman, Michigan, sought to resolve the conflicts between the two groups by creating the United Communist party, but the new party was mainly the Communist Labor party with a small faction of former Communist party members. In 1921, under pressure from the Communist International, the United Communist party and the remnants of the Communist party formed the Communist Party of America, which in turn became the Workers Party of America (in December 1921), the Workers (Communist) party (1925), and the Communist Party United States of America (1929).

Hattie Norris[1] to EVD

[1919-1921]
West Monroe, Louisiana

Dearest Comrade—

While taking notes this afternoon I remember an awful mistake I made in my last letter. Please do not think me so igorant as not to know the difference between wholy and holy, for I do. I often make mistakes when I really do know better. I just do not stop to think. I know that I make many mistakes; but now I am trying my biggest to over come them. I am always pleased when some one else shows me my mistakes when I cannot see them myself.

Please, is it alright for me to except a place as teacher in the Union Sunday school When I do not belong to no earthly Church? Every One knows that I do not belong, and yet wants me as teacher.

A thousand good wishes to you.
Hattie

Please excuse pencil, for my pen point is broken and I havent another at present. Also out of type paper. Hard luck isn't it, ha!

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Hattie Norris (1902-78) was a West Monroe, Louisiana, schoolgirl who was one of Debs's most frequent and devoted correspondents during his imprisonment. Her letters, written over a period of two years, are among the most poignant received by Debs (whose replies to them were written by Katherine or Theodore Debs) and throw considerable light both on Hattie Norris's trials as a student and on the more general political climate of the Red Scare years.

After completing high school in West Monroe, Hattie completed the requirements for a lifetime teaching certificate in Louisiana and taught school in Kilborne, Louisiana, until 1929, when she married William Durbin, a successful manufacturer of cane syrup. Thereafter she remained active in civic affairs, organized the first school for cerebral-palsy students, and, according to her daughter, "loved working with people and especially working with the underprivileged." *Monroe Morning World*, February 19, 1978; letters to the editor from Billye Norris Durbin Logan, Hattie Norris Durbin's daughter (March 12, 1985), and from Dave Norris, Hattie Norris Durbin's nephew (March 20, 1985). The latter was mayor of West Monroe in 1985 and generously donated a score of Norris-Debs letters for use in this edition.

J. O. Bentall[1] to Theodore Debs

June 20, 1919
Brainerd, Minnesota

My dear Comrade:—

Just as I was writing a letter to your brother 'Gene the news came to me that he had been transferred to Atlanta.[2] I know nothing about it except what I saw in the Call. I suppose that after a while some explanation will be given.[3] You are so busy that I do not want to impose upon you, but will you kindly forward the enclosed letter to Comrade 'Gene. I have waited too long to reply to his very kind letters to me, but I never expected he would be rushed away like that.

And, my comrade, how often you have been in my thots, too. Let me tell you a little secret—the faithfulness you have shown to the great cause and to your brother is one of the {most singular in history and} is known and appreciated thruout all the world. Every comrade who knows and loves 'Gene also knows and loves you. We mention it so often in our little groups when we talk about the big movement. You know me only slightly, but I know you well, and know what your services have been.

With kindest greetings of cheer and love to you I am Yours for The Good Big Day of Human Emancipation,

J. O. Bentall

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Jacob O. Bentall was born in Sweden in 1870 and brought to America by his parents the following year. His family settled on a farm in Meeker County, Minnesota, and Bentall worked his way through Carleton College, from which he graduated in 1896. He was the Socialist party candidate for governor of Minnesota in 1916 and an outspoken critic of World War I. This letter was written from the Crow Wing County Jail in Brainerd, where Bentall was serving a one-year term for encouraging a worker on his farm not to register for the draft. In April 1920, Bentall was sentenced to two years in the federal penitentiary at Leavenworth and after a long court battle entered prison in January 1922; President Harding ordered his release in July 1923. Bentall was the Communist party candidate for governor of Minnesota in 1928.

2. Debs was transferred to Atlanta on June 13, 1919.

3. Debs's transfer to Atlanta was viewed widely in the socialist press as evidence of Wilson administration malice, but Warden Joseph Z. Terrell's "The Imprisonment of Eugene V. Debs" (West Virginia University Library) described it as the result of a misunderstanding between the Department of Justice and Moundsville State Prison concerning the ratio of guards to prisoners at the latter and the added cost involved in bringing Moundsville up to federal standards. In a letter dated June 10, 1919, to the superintendent of prisons in Washington, D.C., Terrell said that "for awhile we were put to some additional expense in safe-guarding the walls at night from what

we feared might be done by some crank" but now "everything has apparently quieted down," and he thought that "since the old man has become reconciled to his surroundings and is getting along well in every way . . . I believe it would be better for his own good, and for all concerned, to let him remain where he is." National Archives, Records of the Department of Justice, Record Group 60.

Katherine Metzel Debs to David Karsner

June 22, 1919
Terre Haute, Indiana

Dear Comrade Karsner:

I cannot tell you how pleased I was to receive your postal from Atlanta and to know that someone he knew had been to see him.

You said he looked *fairly* well, now when I visited him, at Moundsville, I thought he looked *very well* and I thought the rest and the quiet was helping him to pull himself together. Trust he will not suffer and that his treatment will be as good as it was at Moundsville.[1]

It seems *ages* since he left here instead of ten weeks. If it wasn't that I am so extremely occupied each and every day I don't know how I could bear it. I have my mother, aged 82, who is almost totally blind to take care of and this keeps me busy and so each day passes, but the yearning for my dear one is never out of heart for one instant. With kindest regards.

Yours fraternally
Katherine M. Debs

ALS, NN Kars.

1. Karsner described his first visit to Debs at Atlanta in his biography *Debs: His Authorized Life and Letters from Woodstock Prison to Atlanta,* 104-5.

EVD to J. Z. Terrell

June 27, 1919
Atlanta, Georgia

My dear Mr. Terrell,

It has taken me some little time to get myself adjusted here or you would have heard from me more promptly. The trip here was without incident. Marshal Smith[1] and his deputies treated me very kindly and did all they could to make the trip pleasant for me.

The check you were kind enough to send was duly received and has been placed to my credit. For this and the many other kindnesses I received at your hands I beg you to accept my warmest thanks. The personal effects you sent to my home reached there in good order, as I am advised by Mrs. Debs.

It was with real regret that I parted with you and that fine and manly son of yours on that to me eventful morning. How proud you and Mrs. Terrell must be of that beautiful boy!

My stay with you at the Moundsville prison will always be to me a source of satisfaction and inspiration. This may seem strange to those who are lacking in sympathy and understanding in such a situation, but it is nevertheless true. The Moundsville Prison under your enlightened and humane direction and ministration was to me a study of the deepest interest and I profited immeasurably by my experience there. From the moment of my arrival, when you personally received me, until I bade you good-bye, you treated me with uniform kindness and with all the consideration the rules would allow, as you did every other inmate of the prison, doing the very best you could to help and encourage them all, and for this I shall always hold you in grateful remembrance.

Please thank Mrs. Terrell for me for her kind and gracious attention to Mrs. Debs & Mrs. Curry and give a loving little message from me to sweet little Barbara Lee. Please also remember me kindly to Mrs. Shiltz, to Captain Shiltz, Captain Athey, Mr. Stillwell, Mr. Brown, Dr. Wilson, Dr. Ashworth and dear Doctor Spears who was so very kind to me in so many ways—also to the boys at the Hospital, and not forgetting my good friend "Bill."[2] I formed a strong personal attachment for them all.

I am getting along well here. The work is light and agreeable and the treatment all I could expect. With kindest regards and warmest wishes,

Yours faithfully,
Eugene V. Debs

ALS, NN Kars.

1. Ned Smith, United States marshal from Fairmont, West Virginia, who accompanied Debs from Moundsville to Atlanta.

2. Warden Terrell's daughter and various members of the prison staff.

EVD to Theodore Debs

July 3, 1919
Atlanta, Georgia

My dearest old Pard:

A thousand loving greetings to you and Gertrude and Marguerite—and "Babe"! You know why, under my limited writing privileges, you have not heard from me before. Also you know, too, that you have been in my heart every moment since we embraced in love and farewell at the depot that never-to-be-forgotten night. You are the sweetest, faithfullest darling of a brother a mortal ever had. Kate has been telling me all about how good & sweet & attentive you & Gertrude & Marguerite have been to her, and that has been of inexpressible solace to me. We all may write a special letter on the Fourth of July & it is this letter that I'm now writing to you. Pls. drop a line to Marguerite[1] & tell her why I can't write & that I send my love & tenderest devotion to them all. The ride down here was hot & tiresome but I stood it well. Had but an hour's notice before leaving & everything was kept profoundly secret. *The first five days here I was locked in my cell day & night.* I'm now assigned to clerical work in Clothing Room, very light, and in charge of Mr. Boyle & Mr. Barring, two very fine men. We work from 8 till near four—then 20 minutes in yard—then supper. We are in our cells from 5 PM to 7 AM—Saturday & Sunday P.M. we have out on the grounds from about 1 to 4. *There are 6 of us in our cell*—my 5 companions are the finest kind of fellows & I love them all. One is a German, one a Jew, one an Irishman, & two Americans. They are all fine, bright fellows & they vie with each other in being kind to me. Don't let any one send me *anything* as it can not come to me under the rules. I have not received a package of any kind, nor a socialist paper or magazine since I've been here. Cigars, Fruit, candy, eatables can not come to me, so please notify Germer[2] & the papers not to send me anything as it will not reach me. Tell the comrades I can not write to them. I can write but one letter a week & that to my family. A special letter requires application in writing, special permission, & must be confined to the one subject for which it is written, which must be specified. The application must be approved by the guard before it can be passed on—it may or may not be granted & when written it may or may not be sent. I am treated exactly the same as the common run of prisoners & have no complaint on that score. The prisoner here to whom we sent a little money for tobacco about two years ago has been very kind to me & returned it many-fold. Bread cast upon the waters etc. Enclosed postal card is

from Dilon[3]—show it to Getrude & Marguerite & then to Mary & then pass it to Kate. I'm in perfect health. My spirits could not be more serene & dauntless. I calmly await the future. All's well! My love & kisses to you all & forever

Gene

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Marguerite Prevey.
2. Adolph Germer, Socialist party national secretary.
3. Debs's brother-in-law, Odilon Mailloux.

Katherine Metzel Debs to Stephen Marion Reynolds

July 26, 1919
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Mr. Reynolds:

Was out of the city when your letter arrived. In reply I have to say, that Gene has never *once* complained of his treatment while at Atlanta. He is serene and cheerful and all is well with him. He feels he has done no wrong neither do I, and in the end it *must* come out alright. All we have to do is to be patient.

As much as I miss Gene and as much as I should love to have him released, to have his liberty, I would not want his time to serve, *shortened one minute* by any promises or by agreeing to anything dishonorable or against his principles. *He must do what he thinks right* and all will be well.

You probably have seen Mr. Darrow[1] ere this and know what is doing.

Remember me most kindly to Mrs. Reynolds also to dear Marion, when you next write her.

With kindest regards to you both I remain,

Yours lovingly
Katherine M. Debs

ALS, InH, Reynolds Collection.

1. Clarence Darrow had supported the United States's entry into World War 1, but he came to view the war as a national disaster and in 1919-20 defended a number of radicals indicted under state sedition laws, including Benjamin Gitlow in New York and a group of Chicago Communists. At the same time, he worked for the release of Debs and other "political prisoners." His offer of assistance to Debs is in Darrow

to EVD, July 20, 1918. In a memorandum from Attorney General Palmer to President Wilson, dated July 30, 1919, Palmer enclosed a letter from Darrow urging Debs's release. Palmer added, "Debs' sentence of ten years is too long and ought to be commuted, but I am firmly of the opinion that the time is not yet ripe for such action." On August 1, 1919, Wilson wrote Palmer, "I entirely agree with your judgment . . . with regard to Debs" and thanked Palmer for "enclosing the letter of Mr. Clarence Darrow." National Archives, Records of the Department of Justice, Record Group 60.

Marguerite Prevey to Theodore Debs

August 20, 1919
Atlanta, Georgia

Dear Theodore:

Mrs. C.[1] probably told you about Sharts[2] and I leaving for Atlanta. We want to start Habeus corpus proceedings on the question of the illegal transfer of Gene from Moundsville to Atlanta,[3] of course we expect to use this legal proceeding for the purpose of having him released. We feel that it would be more of a Victory to get him released by this method than to wait untill Wilson is ready to release him, by the latter method it would be a Victory for the administration and help Wilson to recuperate his political forces, if we should succeed in our program it would mean immediate liberty pending a hearing.

We had an hour's Conference with Gene this afternoon, he would not agree to our plan untill he had time to think about it; he wants to do what is best for the other Political Prisoners as well as himself. We hope he will be able to see our point of view when we talk with him tomorrow evening.

He is looking a little thin but in excellent spirits, we had to wait some time before seeing him, he told me he was busy with the Warden trying to arrange a menu that would be more nourishing for the prisoners than what they are now receiving. Do not worry about him he will come thro all right. Will write you again tomorrow giving you all the particulars. If Gene agrees to our program we will proceed at once and try to have him released on bail.

I am not writing any-one else at Terre Haute, I leave it to you to notify the folk's.

It will be very hard to leave here without Gene, but he is getting along at the Prison, the Warden & he seem to be on very friendly terms, but he's not accepting any favors.

More tomorrow.

Love from Gene to you & all the folks, he said I should tell you he was getting along fine and would come thro all right.

Faithfully,
Marguerite

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Mabel Dunlap Curry.
2. Joseph William Sharts of Dayton, one of Debs's attorneys.
3. In a letter to Attorney General Palmer, dated June 18, 1919, Sharts suggested that Debs's transfer had been illegal because, Sharts argued, "the law . . . governing this transfer" required that "the prisoner, or some one in his behalf," must apply for a transfer. On July 1, 1919, Assistant Attorney General William L. Frierson informed Sharts that the attorney general had ordered Debs's transfer after "the West Virginia State Board of Control demanded [his] removal . . . from the West Virginia Penitentiary." National Archives, Records of the Department of Justice, Record Group 60.

Theodore Debs to Lillian J. White[1]

September 15, 1919
Terre Haute, Indiana

Dear Mrs. White:—

Your favor of the 6th. inst. is received and all you say is read with appreciation. I would have you know that there festers in my heart neither malice nor ill will toward those who differ with my brother's views. My brother stands for a principle, and he has consecrated his life to a cause which at present is about as popular as was the Abolition Movement at the time when the same sordid power and the same capitalist press, which now malign him and his motive, referred to the great humanitarian, Abraham Lincoln, as an "Illinois baboon" and denounced him as a "nigger lover."

In fighting for his convictions my brother gives blows and expects them in return, but it would seem that the very last to join with a prostituted press in its tirade against him would be those prominent in the Suffrage Movement,[2] a cause for years as bitterly and maliciously assailed as his own, and to which he gave freely and frankly, without remuneration, his voice and pen for more than forty years; and at a time when many now conspicuous in that movement were for quite obvious reasons not in evidence; when politicians high and low in degree, including the late Theodore Roosevelt, Wm H. Taft and President Wilson, were either its avowed enemies or attacked it in secret from ambush, and who espoused the cause only when compelled

to do so by popular demand and when their help was no longer required.

However, the matter, so far as I am concerned, is a closed incident. I only wish to add that to those who understand the significance of passing events the position taken by my brother is being daily vindicated.

I very much regret to learn of your illness and earnestly hope that ere now you are much improved if not entirely recovered and that you will soon be restored to the bosom of your family.

With all good wishes I am,

Very truly yours,
[Theodore Debs]

TLc, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. In her letter to Theodore Debs, dated September 6, 1919, Mrs. White, who lived in Rome City, Indiana, described herself as active in "women's club work and Franchise work" and told of her effort (unsuccessful) to secure Debs as a speaker at one of the Rome City Franchise League meetings. She was particularly interested in Debs's role in bringing Susan B. Anthony to Terre Haute in 1880. InTI, Debs Collection.

2. In her September 6 letter, Mrs. White apologized for "quoting from an article that was a misstatement" concerning Debs's attitude toward the suffrage movement.

EVD to Mabel Dunlap Curry

October 28, [1919]
Atlanta, Georgia

My very dear Comrade:

Have just had letter from Kate. She has concluded to come & will be here latter part of week or sooner. Pls. pass letters herewith to Theo. except such as you wish to personally answer. I am in excellent health & my spirits soar among the stars. I'm with you all the time. God bless you for your wonderful devotion!—it keeps me strong and true. My only concern is about *you* & the dear ones. I know how you suffer—& if you could only look into my heart & see how impervious it is to prison punishment you would rejoice & not know an instant's pain. Did you get my little "Walls & Wings" doggerel?

When Kate returns she will report fully how things are here. With my whole heart

Yours
Gene

ALS, CtY.

A. J. Muste[1] to EVD

October 29, 1919
New York City

EUGENE V. DEBS

NATIONAL CONVENTION AMALGAMATED TEXTILE WORKERS OF AMERICA[2] REPRESENTING FIFTY THOUSAND TEXTILE WORKERS SENDS FRATERNAL GREETINGS. WE LOVE AND HONOR YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE TO THE WORKING CLASS AND ARE ASSURED THAT YOUR WORK AND SUFFERINGS WILL HELP BRING TO US IN THE NEAR FUTURE COMPLETE EMANCIPATION.

A. J. MUSTE,
GENERAL SECRETARY,
AMALGAMATED TEXTILE WORKERS OF AMERICA

[EVD note to Theodore Debs]

Pls. acknowledge this fine message. You will find address in A.F. of L. America Directory at the office.

Telegram, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Abraham Johannes Muste (1885-1967) was born in the Netherlands, emigrated to the United States in 1891, and settled in Grand Rapids, Michigan. After receiving a B.A. degree from Hope College in 1905, Muste attended the Dutch Reformed church's theological seminary in New Brunswick, New Jersey, where he was ordained in 1909. During World War I, Muste left the Dutch Reformed ministry, joined the pacifist Fellowship of Reconciliation, with which he was associated for most of the remainder of his career, and in 1919 was elected executive secretary of the newly organized Amalgamated Textile Workers of America. During the period between World Wars I and II, Muste worked in both the pacifist and labor movements, but in the late 1930s he ended his close association with the labor movement and devoted himself almost exclusively to the peace movement, serving as executive secretary of the Fellowship of Reconciliation from 1940 to 1953.

Linn A. E. Gale[1] to EVD

October 31, 1919
Mexico City, Mexico

Dear Comrade Debs:

Of course I know that prison regulations do not permit you to answer this letter and I am not writing it because I expect an answer. I am only writing it to give you my greetings of good cheer in these, your days of trial. I am confident that the hour of your liberation is

not far away and that the same is true of all the brave men and women who have gone to prison for the cause of industrial freedom. Whatever happens, however, your example will be a shining light that will give hope and encouragement to millions who are fighting the unequal fight.

I am what is commonly denominated as a slacker. Refusing to participate in Wall Street's war, I came to Mexico with my wife in July 1918. We waded the Rio Grande River and successfully dodged the war hounds stationed on the border to watch those who tried to flee to Mexico for liberty. We immediately revived the magazine which was originally published in New York, and protected by the neutrality and democracy of the Carranza government, it has been possible for me to publish my message to the world undisturbed by the restrictions and persecution that existed in the U.S. during the war and still exists.

I enclose copy of the platform of the recently organized Communist party of Mexico which I hope will reach your hands and which I am sure you will enjoy reading.

I am also sending you a copy of the last issue of GALE'S and if I find that you are allowed to receive magazines, I will continue sending it to you. Perhaps you can indicate this to your family in writing them some time.

With the love and good wishes of both of us and the sincerest hopes for your speedy liberation, believe me,

Yours in Comradeship,
Linn A. E. Gale

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Linn A. E. Gale (1892-1940) was editor and publisher of *Gale's Journal of Revolutionary Communism*, which he published in Mexico City, where he had fled in 1918 to evade the draft. In the *Melting Pot* (October 1919) he announced the organization of the Communist Party of Mexico, of which he was an executive committee member, and on January 7, 1920, the *Toiler* listed him as one of three Mexican delegates to the meeting of the Third International in Moscow. In 1921, following his extradition from Mexico on draft-evasion and sedition charges, Gale "renounced his former political beliefs and convictions" and agreed to "turn informer and tell the Government all he knows about radicals in the United States and Mexico," but he was tried and sentenced to seven years in Leavenworth (commuted to three years in 1925). *New York Times*, September 18, 1921; August 15, 1940.

Theodore Debs to Arthur Baur[1]

November 6, 1919
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Art:—

Some time since a story came to me to the effect that "Gene would not be where he is if he had not had Theodore riding his back and had to support him and his family,"[2] or words similar in meaning. Your name was mentioned as the accredited author.

Happening to be up-street a day or two later I stopped at the store for the purpose of relating the incident but found you were in the East. In the stress and strain of daily events of infinitely greater import that followed the thing was all but forgotten, until today, when it bobbed up again, somewhat different in form, but substantially the same in substance.

Without hesitation I told my informant that I did not believe that you were guilty of having made any such statement; that it did not sound like Art Baur to me. Moreover, that while the story was a scurrilous fabrication I would not dignify it with a denial, but that the author, was a G-d—D——d, white-livered liar that dare not repeat the slander in my presence; and that I wished him to take my message to those insiduously circulating this foul falsehood.

We have always made it an almost invariable rule to ignore lies put into circulation either for pay or self-gratification. However, since Gene's incarceration the peddlers of filth have become so active that with me silence is no longer a virtue—as some can well testify.

Sincerely yours,
Theodore Debs

TLc, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. As noted, Arthur Baur, a Terre Haute druggist, was Katherine Debs's half-brother.

2. For most of their careers, Eugene Debs shared his income on an equal basis with his brother.

Covington Hall to EVD

November 6, 1919
Dallas, Texas

Dear, Loved Comrade:—

I have read that you were ill[1] but—still smiling, still loving, and still believing in the fast Coming Light. This is as your great heart

ever was, and I only wish I had one-half your dauntless faith and courage. By which wording you can know my heart is restless tonight, but it is not my heart alone that is restless over your immolation, for tonight as I was on my way to the hotel I met State Senator J.C. McNealus[2] of Dallas, editor of The Dallas Democrat,[3] one of the oldest members of the Texas Legislature, a life-long member of the "Democratic" party, and he insisted that I go back to his office that he might read to me an editorial he was publishing on an outrageous letter ex-President Taft had written to a Mr. Williams,[4] who is a prominent Texas businessman, in answer to one Mr. Williams had written him asking him to use his influence to have you pardoned— you who never committed a crime in all your life!—, and, "believe me," the old Senator literally took the hide off old "Injunction Bill";[5] he said in the editorial you never should have been imprisoned, this because Senator McNealus still takes his democracy from Thomas Jefferson. Mr. Williams told him that he had written the same letter to Taft to over 200 prominent Democrats and Republicans and that Taft was the ONLY ONE who had answered adversely and insultingly;[6] all the rest wanted to see you free again. Tom Watson[7] is also, I understand, demanding your release with all the power at his command, and so are thousands of others to fame unknown, and their number is increasing every hour. All of which PROVES you a greater Soul and Statesman than those who thought to silence free thought with prison bars and dungeon cells. How fast Edward Bellamy's[8] prediction as to the fall of Capitalism seems to be coming true! He prophesied that in its final days, in its desperation to save itself, it "Would tend to commit more and more acts that outraged all human sense of right and justice and would thus hasten its own downfall." This is what I think Lenin meant when he was recently reported to have said, "We do not have to carry on propaganda in other countries; we can safely leave that to their Capitalists." But, however that may be, it is certain that you[r] imprisonment has done more than all else combined to destroy the Democratic party, tho this is no consolation to us, for we know that your little finger is worth more to humanity than its entire body.

I just wanted to write you a line telling you that the woods was full of us who still loved and trusted you and that we never shall forget.

Love to you and all the boys from,
Covington Hall

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. In late October and early November 1919, a number of papers carried mistaken stories declaring that Debs "is at the point of death . . . suffering from a breakdown of heart action." Universal News Service clipping in letter from Charles Edward Russell to Assistant Attorney General R. P. Stewart, October 27, 1919. National Archives, Records of the Department of Justice, Record Group 60, File 77175-438.

2. James Clayton McNealus (1850-1921) published the *Dallas Democrat* and for forty years was a leader in the Democratic party in Texas. He served in the state legislature from 1910 until his death. *Journal of the Senate, State of Texas, July 18, 1921 to August 16, 1921* (Austin, 1921).

3. A weekly published in Dallas between 1914 and 1921.

4. The *Toiler* (November 26, 1919), the *Eye-Opener* (November 15, 1919), and other socialist papers published the exchange of letters between T. B. Williams, president of the North Texas Manufacturing Company in McKinney, Texas, and former President William Howard Taft. Williams urged the release of Debs and "all political prisoners"; Taft answered that he "did not sympathize with you in your view of Mr. Debs" who was "a most pernicious influence in the community" who had "advised treason" during the war.

5. In the labor and socialist press, Taft's record as a federal judge from 1892 to 1901, particularly his use of the injunction during strikes, led to the sobriquet Injunction Bill. Debs frequently attacked Taft's judicial record, particularly his use of the injunction during the Pullman Strike, and his article "Injunction Bill" appeared in *Debs Magazine* in July 1922.

6. The *Toiler* (November 26, 1919) reprinted the *Dallas Democrat* editorial "of a recent issue," in which McNealus said that he had "no sympathy with Debs" in his socialist beliefs but that his "sympathies are all with Debs in the matter of his imprisonment." He was, like Debs, "uncompromisingly committed to free speech."

7. In "Tom Watson Defends Debs," the *Appeal to Reason* (April 26, 1919) reprinted a Watson editorial from his paper, the *Columbia Sentinel*, in which Watson wrote that Debs was "my political foe . . . and not my personal friend," but "my heart goes out to him, in spontaneous fellowship, when I see him denied the commonest rights of man."

8. Edward Bellamy (1850-98) was credited with widely disseminating socialist ideas, called nationalism in his novels *Looking Backward* (1888) and *Equality* (1897). In an editorial in the *BLF Magazine* in September 1889, Debs ridiculed nationalism as a "new fangled theory" set forth by the "baked bean enthusiasts" in Boston, including Bellamy, who were suffering from "hallucinations," but in the February 1890 issue of the magazine, Debs wrote a long editorial review of *Looking Backward*, calling it an "inspiring" book that "outlines a possibility, or rather many possibilities, some of which are to be accomplished facts a century in advance of A.D. 2000." In his "Tribute to Bellamy" (*Social Democrat*, June 2, 1898), Debs praised *Looking Backward* as "the first popular exposition of Socialism in this country" and mistakenly predicted that "the fame of this distinguished author, reformer, and humanitarian will rest upon *Equality*."

George Sylvester Viereck[1] to EVD

November 10, 1919
New York City

Dear Mr. Debs:

I received your kind message through Mrs. Mabel Curry. I am very glad indeed, that in spite of your many labors, you have found time to read my book[2] and that you were familiar with my literary activities.

I hear with deep regret that your health is giving serious concern to your friends. I wish there was a way in which we could aid you, for while I do not profess the Socialistic creed, I look upon you as a great personality and a leader of men, perhaps as the Mohammedans look upon Christ, whom they regard as a prophet, without being his followers.

I do not take the same attitude as you. I believe that having accepted certain rights, we also have certain duties, which compels me to surrender to the decree of the majority even if I consider the action unreasonable and unjust. However, I do not deny that your international ideal may be greater and that the future of the world may belong to you. I have stated before that, although I am not a Socialist, I should feel compelled to vote for you to voice my indignation against the Reign of Terror that holds you in gaol.

I do not know to what extent your letters are censored. I do not know whether you will be permitted to receive these lines at all, but as far as I am concerned, I am in this respect like yourself, I am not afraid to avow in public what I have said in private. For the past few years, my letters have been public property or, at least, subjected to the scrutiny of the various Secret Services. I wonder whether that ought not to make one a little theatrical in one's correspondence because one feels that he is not writing for one, but for an audience?

However that may be, my feeling of admiration for you is genuine and if there is any practical way in which I can help you in any manner whatsoever, I am entirely at your disposal. I shall be glad to send you books, magazines or anything that you may be able to receive. I don't think that it would do for me to work in a campaign for your release because the moment I open my mouth the bogey of pro-Germanism appears.

I have not had the honor of meeting you personally, except once in a very casual way through Leonard D. Abbott. However, I feel that I have for you an almost personal affection. Perhaps your ability to inspire such affection is the secret of your success, as well as the secret of your persecution.

I take pleasure in sending you under separate [cover] some of my books which may help you to pass away the time.

Believe me

Sincerely yours,
George Sylvester Viereck

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. George Sylvester Viereck (1884-1962) was born in Munich, Germany, came to the United States in 1895, and graduated from City College of New York in 1906. He was an associate editor of *Current Literature* (1906-15) and editor of *International* (1912-18) and *Fatherland* (*American Monthly*) from 1914 to 1927. In *Fatherland*, which became *American Monthly* during the war, Viereck argued for the loyalty and patriotism of German Americans and chronicled the outrages against them that the wartime hysteria had generated.

2. Of a score of books, Viereck's *Roosevelt: A Study in Ambivalence* (1919) was perhaps his most controversial; it was denounced as disrespectful of the recently deceased former president and was boycotted. *American Monthly*, October 1919.

Sumner W. Rose[1] to EVD

November 11, 1919
Biloxi, Mississippi

Dear Comrade 'Gene:

I have a little letter written by yourself, but sent me by Comrade Theodore, that no money can buy. Not on account of what you say about me personally, but because of what it betrays of yourself. You always ennoble those you write about. You cannot do otherwise, because this is your nature. The nobility you think you discover in others, is often but the reflection of your own.

No, I am not an Eugene Debs. I acknowledge this to myself many times with bitterness to my soul. I am of more common clay, yet I love Jesus Christ, Abraham Lincoln **and** Eugene V. Debs, because they have suffered for the common people—Damn common—Some of us, and not worth suffering for, because we make no effort ourselves.

Since you have been in jail I have loved Jesus Christ more. And it makes no difference to me whether he be God, or Man, or both. I can conceive dimly his terrible suffering at the hands of the persecuters of his day, and the intensest of all his sufferings, when he discovered that he had been denied by his very disciples—his "inner circle" of 12 that he had educated.

But we are not going to deny you, 'Gene; nor are we going to deny Jesus Christ any more. We see the links of the chain from when

history began to the present time, and we are perhaps more wise than the "common people" of Jesus' time.

In the recent election I am sure Socialism increased its vote in Mississippi, although we conducted no campaign. The papers give us no particulars, except where the vote was very small. They have contented themselves with saying "The Socialists voted their own ticket, and such Democrats as had a grudge against their own candidates, voted with them."[2]

I am laid up with a severe attack of Neuralgia at home. But think: *at home;* not in jail! Why should I Kick? If every tooth and jaw jump out of my head—still have I {no} cause to complain, when I think of the better men and women suffering sickness, deprivation and {oppression}, where no loving friends and family can reach.

Theodore writes me that your heart is better and that you no longer take heart medicines. I hope that you may be allowed the proper food to give you strength. If the warden will let me I shall be glad to send you some Gulf Coast oranges and some fresh oysters as soon as the weather cools and the best ones can be had. Believe they'd do you good.

We have been having some very rough weather on the Gulf Coast, but this morning the sun is trying to struggle through the clouds. It pictures to me present conditions. Storms, dark clouds, after while sunshine and happiness. We must believe it so, or go crazy.

Wish I could send you a handful of "Four O'clocks" from my wife's flower garden. They smell so sweet, they would certainly bring delight to your poet soul.

With a million "God Bless You's" and all the love of which a common mudsill is capable I close,

Sumner W. Rose,[3]
Biloxi, Miss

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Sumner W. Rose (1858-1947) was born in Columbus, Ohio, and moved to Biloxi, Mississippi, where he worked as a printer on the *Biloxi Daily Herald* and played an active role in local and state socialist politics. Before World War I, he was a popular socialist lecturer and organizer in the South and for many years served as state secretary. *Biloxi Daily Herald,* November 1, 1947.

2. The socialist candidate for governor, J. T. Lester, received 4,046 votes, or 7.4 percent of the total cast, in the 1919 election.

3. The *Ohio Socialist,* November 12, 1919, printed a letter from Rose in which he suggested that "we employ a doctor" to be sent to check on Debs's health, that "twenty of we old fellows volunteer to serve out Gene's time," each volunteer to serve six months; and that "protest meetings . . . be held all over the country" to demand Debs's release.

Norman Thomas[1] to EVD

November 11, 1919
New York City

Dear Comrade Debs:

We are planning to publish in the next issue of the WORLD TOMORROW,[2] a short sketch of the scheme of the Building Trades Parliament of Britain which has been set up under government authority for the better ordering of the Building industry. We have secured this article from Mr. Malcolm Sparks,[3] who it may be said with accuracy, is the originator of the plan, and indeed, of the kindred movement known as the Whitley Council scheme.

I am sending you herewith a proof of Mr. Sparks' article thinking that you will be interested to see this brief account of what is undoubtedly a very significant development in the industrial life of England, and hoping that you will be able to spare a few moments to write us a few lines by way of commendation or criticism of the scheme.

We are going to supplement this article with a short symposium giving the views of a number of authorities on industrial matters as to the merits and especially as to the practicability under American conditions of the suggestions it contains. We want very much to be able to include an expression from you—will you please send us a brief statement of up to 500 words by Monday or Tuesday of next week. I enclose a stamped and addressed envelope for your use.

Yours sincerely
Norman Thomas
Editor

May I add a word of my admiration and appreciation of all you are doing.

N.T.

[EVD note to Theodore Debs]

Please say that I'd be glad to comply but can't do so in my present situation. Mr. Thomas is a very fine man and entirely friendly & sympathetic. Pls. send our thanks, regrets and best wishes.

TLS (with handwritten note), InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Norman Mattoon Thomas (1884-1968) was born in Marion, Ohio, and was educated at Bucknell College and Princeton Theological Seminary, from which he graduated in 1911. As pastor of the East Harlem Church in New York City, Thomas came under the influence of Walter Rauschenbusch and the Social Gospel movement of the time and in 1918 joined the Socialist party, became secretary of the pacifist

Fellowship of Reconciliation and founded *The World Tomorrow,* which he edited until 1921. One of the founders of the American Civil Liberties Union and the League for Industrial Democracy, Thomas ran as the Socialist party candidate for governor of New York in 1924 and for mayor of New York City in 1925 and 1929. After Debs's death in 1926, he became the leader of the Socialist party and was its presidential candidate in every election from 1928 to 1948. A tireless speaker and writer, Thomas shaped Socialist party policy for four decades, presented its programs as alternatives to capitalism, and kept it free of the taint of communism in the public mind.

2. The Fellowship of Reconciliation monthly journal.

3. In "A Pacifist Adventure in War Time" (*The World Tomorrow,* March 1926), Sparkes, a Quaker, described his plan, undertaken in 1914, to solve the problem of industrial unrest by the creation of industrial "parliaments," composed of equal representation by employers and workers who would cooperate "to promote the continuous and progressive improvement" of each industry. Sparkes's idea was similar to and no doubt influenced the formation of the Whitley Councils established by the government in 1917 for the promotion of better industrial relations in England.

William D. Haywood to EVD

November 17, 1919
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Gene:

We have heard many conflicting stories about your physical condition, but so far as your spirits and mentality is concerned, we know that you would be all right wherever you are.

Realizing what a prison life means and the monotonous routine of steamed food, it causes many of your friends to worry. Everyone of us would be glad to know that your health is good, and the thought that you might die in prison causes serious unrest among all of your friends and co-workers.

But Gene, do not worry. Things are moving big on the outside, particularly across the water. In Italy, the Syndicalist movement is taking on the form and principles of Industrial Unionism. The same is true of Spain, while in France Raymond Perricat, in the last issue of the paper received,[1] advocates the endorsement of the preamble of the Industrial Workers of the World.

At a recent convention held at Dusseldorf one million two hundred thousand workers adopted the preamble without change, and endorsed the fundamental principles of the Industrial Workers of the World.

Within the last two months at Hamburg over 30,000 workers have lined up with us.

Geo. Hardy, one of the convicted men of the Chicago group and who has served his time in full, is now in England. He is working under the auspices of the Shop Steward movement, and he is meeting with splendid reception wherever he goes.[2]

In Sweden and Norway the members who were deported from this country are doing equally as well. In Cuba, South America, and Australia the movement is making giant strides, but here in the United States the bitter persecution relentlessly continues.

During the last week halls and offices have again been raided from New York to Los Angeles. Hundreds of members have been arrested, office fixtures and many tons of literature have been destroyed, but even so things are not so bad as the above sentence would indicate. I just received this telegram from New York:

> Nov. 16
>
> "All New York halls raided Saturday night. furniture and literature destroyed. Many members brutally beaten, some in hospital. Chumley[3] and John Edwards arrested tried and case dismissed. Raids by the Bomb Squad for the avowed purpose of breaking up organization. Hall Open again and many new members taken in.
>
> Chumley."

To this wire, I replied:

> "The old Russianized methods adopted against the members there and elsewhere throughout the country will arouse the working class to the necessity of joining the Industrial Workers of the World as their only means of emancipation. The idea is imperishable."

Be of good cheer, Gene, and kindly remember me to any friends that may be incarcerated with you.

With kindest regards to you, I am
Wm D Haywood

[EVD note to Theodore Debs]

Pls. write Haywood an appreciative note. Tell him his message cheered the boys here & they all send greetings & best wishes. Tell him not to worry about my health. I'm feeling better now than since I've been here. The cool weather is most bracing to me. I'm gaining steadily in weight—now tip the beam at 167.

TLS (with EVD note to Theodore Debs), InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Raymond Pericat published a weekly paper, the *Internationale,* in Paris. In the *Liberator* (September 1919), Max Eastman urged readers to send Pericat money for support of the paper.

2. George Hardy served for a time (1921) as general secretary of the IWW and,

like Haywood, eventually settled in the Soviet Union. A *New York Times* article, November 5, 1919, described Hardy's work in England as "an active campaign . . . to persuade English workmen to appeal directly to Washington for the release of all I.W.W. men imprisoned in America."

3. Leland Stanford Chumley was editor of an IWW paper, *Rebel Worker.* He was arrested in his office by the New York City bomb squad on November 15, 1919, "for carrying a pocket knife," according to the *New York Times* (November 19, 1919), and his office, he said, "had been wantonly wrecked by the raiders."

Caro Lloyd Strobell[1] to EVD

November 18, 1919
New York City

Dear Comrade Debs:

Many, many times I think of you, and now at last I am writing to tell you so. Amid all the discouragements of the times, your image stands like a great light. For you were tried and not found wanting. You did not fail those who for so many years had put their trust in you. You proved yourself a great man, and will be remembered and beloved long after famous men of today are forgotten. You seem to embody in yourself the vision, and the struggle of the great body of the people. It is a satisfaction to me to say this to you now while you are living, instead of waiting until your biography is written, and to say it now while you are "despised and rejected" by a few men, {though} only a few.

Because of the spirit that I know is in you, I never feel sorry for you. We all realize the calm serenity with which you meet your fate, because of the great inner light you have, the great love for our cause and the joy you have in thus silently serving the ends which your eloquence has illumined for so many years.

I feel as if I were writing to you in the place of my beloved brother, Henry D. Lloyd, who would have stood by you in these days. I am enclosing a woodcut of him for you to have in your room. He said to Spargo,[2] "This question will never be settled until Debs, and you and I and others go to jail." When Attorney-General Monnett[3] of Ohio was prosecuting the Standard Oil Company in his state, he wrote to Henry that if he took a certain next step, he should have to go to jail. Henry telegraphed him to go to jail and he would come and sit there with him as many days as he had to serve.

And thus I feel that he is beside you in spirit[4] today, as so many of us are.

Heartfelt greetings to you, beloved comrade, from his sister,

Caro Lloyd Strobell

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Caro Lloyd (Withington), Henry Demarest Lloyd's sister and biographer, was married to George H. Strobell, a jewelry manufacturer who was for many years a chief financial supporter of the Intercollegiate Socialist Society. Strobell died in 1923 at the age of seventy in the Soviet Union, where he had gone as a volunteer worker on a Russian Reconstruction Farm. *League for Industrial Democracy News-Bulletin*, December 1923.

2. John Spargo, who left the Socialist party in 1917.

3. As attorney general of Ohio from 1896 to 1900 and later as a special consultant to President Theodore Roosevelt, Francis Sylvester Monnett played a leading role in the prosecution of the Standard Oil Trust at both the state and federal levels.

4. Henry Demarest Lloyd died in 1903; Caro Lloyd's biography of him appeared in 1912.

EVD to Theodore Debs

November 24, 1919
Atlanta, Georgia

My dearest Theo[1] Monday 24th

The packet will go to the Warden's office in the morning. The packet will be sent each Tuesday morning and each Friday morning. If it does not reach you each Thursday morning and each Monday morning it is because it is being held for some reason, and you will therefore understand the delay. In answering the letters I send you will simply have to say that I am unable to answer them on account of prison rules. A brief suggestion may be attached to some of the letters as to what to say but even this will not be done unless it is absolutely necessary, for all of which there is good and sufficient reason. Please say to Mabel that I can not write her this week as I used my special permit to write to you, it being necessary to make certain requests and suggestions which you will note in the letter that goes to you on Tuesday and should be with you on Thursday—I feel very sad to hear of the death of Comrade Quantz.[2] He was a loyal old comrade who suffered much without complaint in the service of the cause, and his death is a distinct loss to the movement. The weather here is beautiful, everything is well with me, and I never felt surer

of the future. With a heart full of love and kisses for you and Gertrude and Marguerite,

Yours eternally
[Gene]

I clasp you firmly to my heart. You are the sweetest, loyalest brother in the world and I am very proud of you.

AL, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. As noted, letters received by Debs at Atlanta were forwarded to Theodore Debs in Terre Haute, often with Debs's notes suggesting replies to be made by Theodore.

2. John A. Quantz, a socialist printer in Terre Haute.

Antonio de P. Araujo[1] to EVD

December 2, 1919
Muzquiz, Coahila, Mexico

My dear Comrade & old friend:—

All Comrades throughout Mexico believing in the thing for which you are the sacrifice, wish you health.

For myself, I don't forget your solidarity when fighting against the dictatorship of Diaz, ten years ago. Then, you wrote a gold page in the History of Mexico.

Yours for freedom.
Antonio de P. Araujo

[EVD note to Theodore]

This is a fine Mexican comrade. Be sure to send my thanks & love. He refers to the time when I helped him & the other Mexican leaders (I was then on the Appeal to Reason) to make the fight for the overthrow of Diaz—He & they were all arrested & imprisoned. He was sent to the Federal prison at Leavenworth & I went there to see him.

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. As editor of the *Appeal to Reason,* Debs had written frequently of "the Mexican cases" in the years leading up to the Revolution against Díaz in 1911 and of the United States government's persecution of the Mexican rebels who had fled to the United States to continue their anti-Díaz work. One of his articles, "With Araujo in Prison" (*Appeal,* March 13, 1909), described Debs's visit with Araujo in the Leavenworth prison, where the latter was serving a three-year term for violation of the

neutrality laws. To Debs, Araujo was "in prison because of his virtues," a man who "will one day be known as a patriot and emancipator."

Charles Baker to EVD

December 2, 1919
Rockford, Illinois

Dear Big Chief Beloved Gene:—

I have not bothered you with letters, these past months, tho my heart has been with you in your honored chamber, at Atlanta.

But today, in memory of this day one year ago, let me intrude, forgive me for disturbing the silence of your Prison Cell.

It was one year ago, this morning, that you greeted my comrades and I, at Canton,[1] as the doors swung open, to return us to liberty and our comrades. And today while I roam at large, able to trample under foot the beautiful white angels of heaven, the iron bars enclose you, But there is music in the air, Gene, and I am sure you can hear even in your prison tomb the marching of the Workers.

Dec. 2nd 1918, has been burnt into my soul, this day shall remain sacred in my memory, during life, and with dreams, and hopes I look forward to the coming day, when I shall be blessed, in greeting you as you return to your comrades.

Until that day, my heart and soul, shares your prison cell, the beauty has been taken out of life, to return, only when you have returned.

In Love and Comradeship.
Chas. Baker

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Baker, Charles Ruthenberg, and Alfred Wagenknecht had completed their one-year terms for draft interference at this time. Baker had recently left the Socialist party to join the Communist Labor party. In 1921 he became a member of the national executive committee of the new Workers party.

Ryan Walker to EVD

December 16, 1919
Great Notch, New Jersey

My dear Gene Debs:

Maudie and I send you our heartfelt love and Christmas Greetings. Never a day passes but what we think of you with the deepest affection

and love. The world will never seem right to us until you are free. There is a bitter sorrow that is always with me. Every month on the 13th I always have a cartoon tribute to you in The Call.[1] Just had a long, long letter from Mother Jones.

Dave's book[2] will be out Thursday—the 18th. The astronomers tell us that owing to the position of the stars and sun in relation to the earth that the world may come to an end on the 17th. This is a worry to Dave as he wants you and the Warden to get a copy of The Life of Debs before this happens.

With a deeper love than you can ever know—Maudie and I send our love and Seasons Greetings

Ever your pal
Ryan

I got an old A.R.U. man a good job and a home. He is just out of prison a lifer—served 35 years[3] in California on account of A.R.U. troubles. He is 65 years old.

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Debs entered the Moundsville prison on April 13, 1919.
2. David Karsner's *Debs: His Authorized Life and Letters from Woodstock Prison to Atlanta* was published by Boni and Liveright in December 1919.
3. The "A.R.U. troubles" must have dated from 1894-95, twenty-five years earlier.

Mrs. Pearl Perman[1] to EVD

December 20, 1919
Attalla, Alabama

Dear Comrade,

Our home used to be in Toledo, Ohio, and we never missed hearing you speak while we lived there.

I was married and came South to live ten years ago, and we named our first little boy Eugene after you, as I have always considered you one of our noblest of men, and I hope my son will always try to follow your example for certainly your's inspires one with unselfishness and courage, but what a crime it is that you have to undergo such bitter trials, when your only crime is devoting your entire life to the betterment of mankind.

It seems such a shame that the working people did not use their voting power to remedy conditions until things have gotten into such a serious shape, but we must not give up hoping for better things soon.

As the holiday season approaches I am sure all who believe in Justice and Right are sending you and all the rest of the innocent prisoners their thoughts of love and sympathy, and it makes us feel that it is wicked for us to even enjoy our children's happiness, while you all are imprisoned for trying to apply to every day life the teachings of Him whose birthday we soon should celebrate with "Peace, and good will towards all men," but it is hard to hold good will to those who are determined that our working class shall continue in slavery that their selfish greed may be satisfied.

Every night your little namesake and his five year old brother, remember you in their prayers, that Right may soon triumph and that you all will enjoy liberty and life as never before.

I have tried to impress on their minds that the sacrifice you all are making is for the good of us all, and in order to prevent any more such human slaughters as we have just passed through.

I feel certain that those on the other side are helping us all they can, and we must not give up hoping, praying or working until the better days come.

Yours for justice to all
Mrs. Pearl Perman
Route 2 Attalla, Ala.

With love and best wishes from the boys, Eugene & Delbert.[2] They wanted to buy you something for Xmas.

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. In a later letter (February 5, 1920), Mrs. Perman (1878-1935) told Debs that her "dear brother. . . first got me interested in Socialism in Ohio by coaxing me to go with him to hear you speak—my eyes were opened at once and my belief has never wavered." She was "prominently identified with church work" in her community. *Gadsden* (Alabama) *Times,* December 24, 1935.

2. Eugene Perman was born in 1910, Delbert in 1915, and a third son, Melvin, in 1917. Helen Perman Jaggears to editor, September 5, 1985. InTI, Debs Collection.

Katherine Metzel Debs to EVD

December 25, 1919
[Terre Haute, Indiana]

"To that Old Sweetheart of Mine"
"Greetings and good wishes"

I think of you lovingly and devotedly each passing hour of the day, at night I lay my hand reverently on your dear pillow and say "good

night" and in the morning I step in and say "good morning dear" and kiss your pillow. *Love, Love, how wonderful it is!* And *mine* is true and enduring through all time.

Your devoted wife
K

Christmas card with note (date in hand of EVD), Debs Home, EVD Foundation.

David Karsner to EVD

January 1, 1920
New York City

My Dear Gene:—

A heart full of love goes to you from me on this New Year. I was highly honored by Mrs. Debs who sent me a beautiful Christmas Card. I have just received a fine letter from Mr. Gable[1] who, referring to the book, says:

> "It gave me great pleasure to receive from you, an inscribed copy, in your autograph, of your splendid: Life Of Debs. I am greatly honored indeed, by his reference to me, which you kindly included in your work on Page 86.[2] To have the love of a man like Debs is one of the worth while things of life and I only wish I was more worthy of it. I value your inscription and feel that this treasured volume is a gift from the heart. I have many Association Volumes[3] in my library and you have added another important and most delightful one."

Mr. Gable ordered one hundred copies for his store. The publishers are greatly pleased with the reception of the book thus far, although they realize they have but scratched the surface. The socialist party is lending every possible assistance in the distribution of the book. It has already been reviewed most generously by Jim Oneal in The Call,[4] and by 'Advance,' the official organ of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America. My Traubel book[5] has not yet made its appearance, due to several printorial difficulties, but I am assured of books this week. I hope to be able to present you with a copy when they come.

It may be possible that I can come down to see you soon. I was discussing a possible trip in the office the other day. Please give Castleton[6] my love when you see him. He is a rare soul, and I love

him very much for the fine things he has done and for the splendid ideals he stands for.

To you, Dear Comrade and Brother, I extend my hand holding in it my heart, and pledging anew my love and devotion for now and always,

David Karsner

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Probably William F. Gable, owner of the People's Store in Altoona, Pennsylvania, and a friend of Debs and Horace Traubel.

2. In *Debs,* Karsner described Gable as "a man of generous heart, and for many years an admirer of Debs."

3. A copy of a book that had belonged to its author or to a person identified in some way with it or its subject.

4. In the *New York Call Magazine* (December 28, 1919), Oneal described Karsner's biography as "timely and [one which] should be of service in bringing to the attention of millions what is happening under 'the starry banner of freedom.' "

5. Karsner's *Horace Traubel His Life and Work* was published by Egmont Arens in New York and dated 1919.

6. Samuel M. Castleton.

William Ellery Leonard[1] to EVD

January 2, 1920
Madison, Wisconsin

My dear Eugene Debs,

Your good brother—who seems to me, {by the way,} such a towering example of a brother's love for a brother—has just written me that you are permitted to receive letters. Here to fore I've supposed I could greet you only via Terre Haute. It is a great satisfaction—and a moment I will long remember—This writing to you on this bright snow-afternoon from my study by the frozen lake and the bare woods at the outskirts of the city. This mere "hello" across the continent is an ennobling opportunity {for me.} And the "hello" itself is about the whole matter. For I can tell you nothing that you must not already know very well and I would only spoil it, burlesque it, by the telling. Your imprisonment has something in it historic, creative, prophetic, something too solemn and big for words. Yet who, among the millions that honor you, {but} wants to see you free tomorrow!

I'm reminded of a little group at my house the other evening—among them, {one} a Captain back from the Russian Front ({himself} the son of a Justice of a State Supreme Court) and another the son

of a wealthy broker—but all interested in forward movements. All of them in one way or another had picked up, in a world very far from the world of the workers, one fact or another in praise of your courage and human kindness; and all of them—oldest American stock—felt how pitiably Un America has been the treatment meted out to this man whose life has been given to the good of his fellows. Somehow I feel it's right for me to report this to you—though somehow too I feel that you are too earnest and serene for mere pleasant gossip, and that I myself cut an awkward figure in passing it on.

I admit I feel awkward on another count. This goes from the *University* to the *Jail;* from the *Professor,* to the *Proletarian.* And I cant adjust myself to the incongruity. For note my difficulties! I must be loyal to my Cult (and my Job!) on the one hand, and feel a little chagrined at some not very complimentary remarks you have made in the past on this Cult;[2] and on the other hand I'm beginning to believe the Jail is (at present at least) a greater educative influence than the University, and certainly the Best of the Proletarians as considerably better than the Best of the Professors, except when the Professors are themselves Proletarians. And, believe it or not, some are headed that way—and not altogether because they eat the bread of others and find it buttered pretty thin. Sometime I wish indeed I could talk with you on the eventual getting-together of the Gown and the Shirt. They belong together {the Gown is now more threadbare than the Shirt!}—they should help each other, as they are already {doing} in some parts of the world! I know we have too often been aloof, speculative, snobbish; but not all, nor always. On the other hand I feel Labor has sometimes taken our aloofness, etc., too much for granted—has too readily assumed that, because we love books, read books, and write books, we cant love or know—or be ourselves a part of—the movements of life. The chief *real* problem is, I think, in our eventual *dependence* {(social, intellectual, moral)} on endowments, investments (see where Harvard's income comes from), or on this control of the present very dubious system of society. I propose to work toward getting you to talk before the students here—*shortly.*

With many greetings of admiration and affection,

William Ellery Leonard

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. William Ellery Leonard (1876-1944) was a poet, translator, and for many years a professor of English at the University of Wisconsin, where his open opposition to World War I and defense of such radicals as Tom Mooney and Debs, made him one of the school's most controversial figures.

2. Debs's often-stated opinion of American universities emphasized their capitalist support, curriculum, and control. In "The School for the Masses" (*American Socialist,* September 18, 1915), which fairly summarized his attitude on the matter, Debs wrote that "the colleges and universities are for the few only, the sons and daughters of the rich and such of the sons and daughters of the poor as are willing to be intellectually prostituted in the service of the rich." A longer and earlier statement of his views on American universities is in "The American University and the Labor Problem" (*The Adelbert,* February 1896).

Hattie Norris to EVD

January 5, 1920
West Monroe, Louisiana

My Dearest Friend:—

How your sweet and promising message[1] fills my heart with overflowing tides! Your message to me is worth all Xmas gifts I have ever received yet. How I do want to thank your most kind brother and tell him my feeling for him.

As I sit by the fire some nights back; Mother said to me: "dont you guess Comrade Debs will get worried answering your letters!" You should not bother him so, for he has more important business to see after." My eyes clouded with tears, and after gazing into the fire for some few minutes I answered: "Mother I guess he does get tired and should not be bothered, but if he only knew how much his letters are to me I don't think he would mind."

Fairies are but sweet thoughts that fall from the pure hearts and souls of humanity. How precious are these little spirits, for they come to cheer the noblest hearts when they have been wounded by the evil powers of the earth.

They smooth away the tears and kiss the burning cheeks with cooling breathe so pure and tender.

The people here are all {out of} employment. All the mills and shops have been closed for about two weeks. All you can hear from the people is what they call hard-times, and they don't know what to do. I told some of them was what they voted for, and they should not complain. I guess will not be long before they will know.

Today we are but children at school, but tomorrow we shall be men and women. Today we are but forms that process life but tomorrow we shall [be] returned to dust. Tomorrow will be today, Today

will fade away into Yesterday. How life flees from us How fades a flower on a cold winter day so fades our lives.

School hours and days.
Hattie Norris.
Box 146

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. In one of Debs's undated notes, forwarded to Hattie Norris by Theodore Debs, he calls her "our bright little Louisiana comrade" who "is wise and thoughtful for her age and she is almost alone down there. Her light shines in the darkness." InTI, Debs Collection.

Mae Bishop[1] to EVD

January 8, 1920
Salt Lake City, Utah

Dear Comrade:

I have refrained from writing to you earlier for fear that I might be intruding, for I am one of those on the outside of that great circle of friends which must be yours, but I have thought of you so often lately that I can restrain myself no longer.

To introduce myself to you, I will go back twelve years, I think it was in the summer or early fall of the year 1908 that I had the pleasure of meeting you, when you were making your tour on the "Red Special."

You spoke in Glenwood Springs, Colo., on Sunday afternoon[2] at an out-door meeting held under the state bridge. I was little more than sixteen years old and only married a short while, I had never heard of the class-struggle and did not know there was such a thing as the Socialist party in the world. I listened to your lecture and recognized the truth of what you said, and after the meeting I lingered and asked you questions. You took particular pains to explain things in such a way that a young girl could understand and in such a kindly way, I shall never forget it.

Together with my husband and mother, I walked over to the Midland depot with you, a distance of about a mile and as you had to wait some time for your train, we waited and talked with you until the train left. I don't suppose that you remember this meeting, you have so many to remember, but I have always remembered it with pleasure and with gratitude to you that you helped me to start out in the right direction at such an early age, for immediately afterward

I subscribed to socialist publications and it only took about three weeks to thoroughly convince me and I have been an agitator for socialism ever since.

Since coming to Salt Lake City I have become more active and for three years have helped in my small way in the Socialist party and also in the People's Council, so much so that I have been found important enough to be black-listed, to have my home raided, and to be brought before the Dept. of Justice, and at the present time I am about to be expelled from the stenographer's union because I carry a card in a "red organization," those are the things that hurt the most coming from my own class, fellow wage-slaves, but my small troubles are trifles compared to the ordeals faced by some of the comrades who are now behind prison walls.

Pardon my writing so much about myself so long, I only do so feeling that it may comfort you to know that the seed sown by you so long ago has born fruit, though I know I am but one of thousands whom you have been instrumental in winning to the cause of the class struggle.

At present I am affiliated with the Communist Labor party[3] and I sincerely hope I am not wrong, I deplore the split in the ranks of the socialist movement at a time when we needed unity the most, I hoped that a more definite program could be put forth in the Socialist party but the split came instead, sometimes I fear that the comrades were stampeded into taking too hasty action and then again I think that organizations or their names do not amount to so much as principles and that it is the principles that one should be loyal to and I feel that I can battle just as sincerely for the cause in the C.L.P. as in the Socialist party. I regretted to leave the party and yet my convictions urged me to, but I should feel it keenly if my action caused me to be put in the light as being a traitor.

To you, dear comrade, I wish to say that I have always had and always will have the greatest faith in you, you have passed through the most severe tests and remained true, you have never disappointed me.

No need for me to tell you that my heart aches with the thought of you spending your days behind prison bars, no need to say that the great heart of the *class-conscious* toilers is with you and with the countless thousands of our comrades in prison today. Sometimes I get discouraged and think that we will never be able to do anything to liberate our comrades, and now so many more are being added to the list that it seems there will not be prisons enough to hold them all, but we will not lose heart, but will go [on]—and on—and on,

until—finally—the freedom, contentment and happiness which we all long for will be reality.

I know that you are limited to a certain number of letters so I will not resent it if you do not answer mine, though I would treasure a personal letter from you very much, still I would not want to infringe on the rights of those who have a greater claim on your friendship than I.

I shall be content if my letter should help to brighten a few moments of your time, so with a heart full of love for you, I will close with the hope that with the new year, political amnesty will be granted to all our comrades.

Your comrade,
Mae Bishop.

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. The 1919 and 1920 Polk city directories for Salt Lake City list a Mrs. Mae Bishop as a stenographer and boarder.

2. Debs spoke in Glenwood Springs, Colorado, on Sunday, September 6, 1908.

3. As noted, the Communist Labor party, with Alfred Wagenknecht as national secretary and an executive committee composed of Max Bedact, Alexander Bilau, Jack Carney, Edward Lingren, and L. E. Katterfeld, was one of two Communist parties organized in Chicago in September 1919 following their bolt from the Socialist party convention. *Ohio Socialist,* September 10, 1919.

Katherine Metzel Debs to David Karsner

January 10, 1920
Terre Haute, Indiana

Dear Comrade Karsner:

I have received and read your book, each page, with the greatest interest and appreciation, and I am more than grateful that at last the attitude of my husband during the war is now presented truthfully to the public with a clearness and insight that even the most stupid must comprehend.

From the very beginning it has been the sinister design of the powers that brazenly plunder the people, and its subsidized press, to ignore, conceal or mistate the truth; and how well they have succeeded in deceiving the public is evinced in the fact that scarcely one person in a thousand really knows the cause of his incarceration. But the fact is gradually dawning upon the masses that with my husband's conviction the constitutional right of free speech was struck a smashing

blow in the face and that today this sacred heritage, wet with the blood of our ancestors, lays prostrate at the feet of mammon.

For obvious reasons the speech of my husband at Canton has not appeared in the public prints, and so I feel under the deepest obligation to you for having rendered such a faithful account of his utterance on that occasion and the work to which he has consecrated his life.[1]

My husband has been in prison for nine, long weary months, but painful as it is, I would rather, a thousand times over, have him down there with conscience clear, true to his manhood, true to every conviction of right, true to ideals high and holy, his self-respect unimpaired—than have him free with an indelible stain on his soul, loathed and reviled by his fellow-man, and his cheek forever crimson by the blush of shame.

From the depths of a grateful heart I thank you for the great and splendid service you have rendered us and the cause and with greetings of love to you and yours, I am

Yours faithfully,
Katherine M. Debs

ALS, NN, Kars.

1. Karsner reprinted Debs's speeches to the jury and to Judge Westenhaver in his *Debs.*

Clarence Darrow to EVD

January 14, 1920
Washington, D.C.

My dear Debs,

I am down here to see if I can do a little on this mad crusade against freedom.[1] I did not go to the Attorney General on your case. In my frame of mind I couldnt ask him to do any thing. At the same time I felt that I had no right to talk about individuals and I knew perfectly well that you would feel the same way. Incidentally I am lead to believe that your case & others will be disposed of when the treaty is signed by U.S.[2] I dont know I hope so, but it is no time to bother about individuals—much as I care for you. Any how I want you to know how I feel about this Madness. & that nothing can happen which can make me overlook you for long.

With deepest regards & affection

Your friend
Clarence Darrow

[EVD note to Theodore Debs]

Pls. acknowledge with thanks. Tell him we know he'll do the best he can and all he can & that's enough. His fidelity and his unforgetfulness is everything.

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. In *Red Scare: A Study in National Hysteria 1919-1920*, Robert K. Murray concluded (p. 239) that "the month of January 1920 marked the height of the Great Red Scare," with its deportations, raids on radicals, expulsion of socialist legislators in New York, the Lusk committee investigations, and other manifestations of the "crest of hysteria," much of which was blamed on Wilson's attorney general, A. Mitchell Palmer.

2. The Treaty of Versailles, embodying Wilson's League of Nations, was rejected by the Senate in votes taken in November 1919 and March 1920.

Katherine Metzel Debs to William B. Kilpatrick[1]

January 20, 1920
Terre Haute, Indiana

Dear Mr. Kilpatrick:

Your kindly interest in my husband expressed in your letter of recent date is received and appreciated. I am more than grateful that at last the attitude of my husband during the war is now presented *truthfully* to the public in the "Debs" publication by Karsner.—My husband has been in prison for nine, long weary months, but painful as it is, I would rather, a thousand times over, have him there with conscience clear, true to his manhood, true to every conviction of right, true to ideals high and holy, his self-respect unimpaired—than to have him free with an indelible stain on his soul, loathed and reviled by his fellow men, and his cheeks forever crimsoned with the blush of shame.

Right *must* prevail and it *will.* We have only to wait and be patient and not lose hope.

My husband is in good health and is very serene and can bide his time as he is *right* and has committed *no* crime. If it were otherwise it would be unbearable. Thanking you again.

Yours sincerely,
Katherine M. Debs

ALS, Debs Home, EVD Foundation.

1. William B. Kilpatrick (1877-1959) practiced law in Warren, Ohio, for fifty-two years and served two terms as a Democratic member of the Ohio state legislature and four terms as mayor of Warren.

Theodore Debs to Upton Sinclair

January 20, 1920
Terre Haute, Indiana

Dear Comrade Sinclair:

I am much gratified by your very kind letter of thé 16th. and its enclosure. I approve and appreciate the spirit in which you carried out my suggestions as well as your manner of doing so. Yes, I remember how generous you were in your book proposition[1] to Gene and we have both held that kind proposal to your credit ever since. I appreciate especially the letter you wrote to Ruth[2] and sincerely hope it will result in a perfect understanding and reconciliation.

I feel quite sure the books you have on hand will be readily disposed of after Gene gets on the platform again. With continued best wishes,

Yours fraternally,
Theodore Debs

TLS, InU, Lilly Library, Sinclair MSS.

1. In 1920, Sinclair published *Debs and the Poets,* a ninety-eight-page collection of poems and brief prose tributes dedicated to Debs. William Ellery Leonard's "The Old Agitator" was one of the most widely reprinted poems in the collection, which included tributes from Carl Sandburg, Israel Zangwill, Helen Keller, Edwin Markham, Max Eastman, David Starr Jordan, and Sinclair himself.

2. Ruth Le Prade of Los Angeles solicited and edited the material in *Debs and the Poets* and wrote one of the tributes in it.

Scott Nearing to EVD

February 3, 1920
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Dear Comrade,—

It would do your heart good to hear the round of applause that greets every mention of your name at a public meeting. You have friends by the hundred where you had ten before.

The work goes on—under increased difficulties. You no doubt have the New York papers. It looks now as though everything would be closed down except the Labor Party.[1] Many of the comrades are taking up work with the unions and the co-operative movement. That seems to be the place where they can get the best results.

The number of comrades who will be tried in the next few months

is very large. At the same time, the papers have never been so full of the ideas for which we stand. The work is bearing fruit.

You have no idea how many tens of thousands are sending you good thoughts from day to day.

Scott Nearing

On the train—

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. The American Labor party held a New York City convention on February 23, 1920, to nominate "a slate for all offices from Assemblyman to President." *New York Times,* February 24, 1920.

Irving L. Spencer[1] to EVD

February 4, 1920
St. Louis, Missouri

My dear Mr. Debs:—

I hope you will not object to my writing a few lines to let you know how much I admire you.

Altho I fought in France and was wounded and gassed, I believe in every word you said in that speech for which you were convicted. I have seen war in all its horror. I have seen men kill one another and I know its wrong.

I am in a government hospital now recovering from tuberculosis—a result of gas. The government is treating me excellently but no treatment they could give me, would compensate me for what I went thru.

I am not quite twenty years old yet so I have ample time to complete my education which was interrupted when I enlisted. I am studying law now and intend to devote my life to the Cause for which you are suffering now.

What you have done for the people, the heroism with which you have refused to retract your statements, will live long after the present administration hypocrites have passed into oblivion.

If there is ever anything I can do for you, Mr. Debs, you will find me always willing.

Fraternally,

Your sincere admirer
Irving L. Spencer

3640 Marine Ave;
U.S. Marine Hosp;
St. Louis, Mo.

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Under the heading "From the Heart," Spencer's letter to Debs was published in the *Eye-Opener* on April 1, 1920.

William Ellery Leonard to Theodore Debs

February 5, 1920
Madison, Wisconsin

Dear Mr. Debs—

The little slip of paper with that number[1] upon it and the all-too-generous words of your brother is something I shall always treasure among the few great witnesses of life that have come to me. And only this evening I have {been} reading Karsner's noble record (at a recent meeting of our Social Science Club it was my privilege to call attention to the book and twenty or more subscriptions were taken forthwith, including {those of} three faculty men and the pastor of the Unitarian Church here, Dr. E. Haydon,[2] a professor of philosphy at the University of Chicago, and a fearless thinker on social questions). I've just finished the book, I say—and, as I took the {convict's} slip in my hand, I found myself nearly in tears—Tho my own social vision—more than the result of my own instincts perhaps than of {much personal experience or of} organized political and social study—is not unlike that which Eugene Debs has so manfully won by intimate contacts with the workers, I think the wisest saying in Karsner's book is that which prophesies that in the future it will be the *man* rather than his social philosophy (or, I'd add, than even the concrete details of his social service) who will take his immemorial place in American history. *I've felt that profoundly ever since the indictment.* In the last analysis, his mission is his indomitable character and his love of mankind. The American people will sometime reckon him as one of the precious moments of their tradition. He seems to me to belong to that type which in our hours of vision we have felt to be peculiarly

our own, the type symbolized by Abraham Lincoln, the type too filled with the inner light, too surging with sorrow and pity, too restive to speak what it knows, to be cautious or circumspect {or even technically "practical,"} or even to realize {or to think in terms of} the {mere} legalities of civic life: it is the type that has always been maligned and misunderstood till it has had time to grow into the hearts and imaginations of men. The mere *reason*—itself more or less a legalistic function of thought—can-not "get the number" of such a man,—or can get only his convict number! As one who grew up[3] near Emerson's Concord home, who has talked with old friends of John Brown and Lincoln—whose boyhood intimate was, a ninogenarian clergyman, an abolitionist expelled from his pulpit in Salem, Mass {in the fifties}, the friend of Emerson & Whittier,—as the son myself of a father,[4] newspaper man & clergyman, who was forever in a fighting minority (he is now sinking toward sunset at 82 in Roxbury, Mass),—it is this side of Eugene Debs' relation to the American Life that comes home to me above all else. *He is in the great tradition.*—I was much pleased to read Karsner's fine tribute to you.[5] I had *sensed* some realization of your splendid devotion. Indeed I wish I were a neighbor. It would do me a lot of good in purely human ways—even if we never talked socialism (a matter, however, I find I'm talking about more than is good for me).

I'm much gratified if my interest in the issue so dear to you all in the home at Terre Haute helps a little. But you have supporters, yes, even in our Universities, whose voices you may not have heard. I shall write to Atlanta shortly & enclose a copy in my handwriting of those verses.

Faithfully
W. E. Leonard

P.S. Don't attempt to answer this—your hands must be full.

P.S. no 2. B.W. Huebsch[6] in N.Y. is about to publish a volume of poems "The Lynching and other Poems"—of social interpretation and protest—written in these last months, in the time I've taken from lectures and library. Among them will be "The Old Agitator."[7]

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Probably Debs's prison number, 9653, with which he occasionally signed notes to Theodore.

2. Albert Eustace Haydon (1880-1975) was pastor of the Unitarian Church in Madison, Wisconsin, from 1918 to 1924 and professor of comparative religions at the University of Chicago (where he earned a Ph.D. in 1918) from 1919 to 1945.

3. In Bolton, Massachusetts.

4. Leonard's father, William James Leonard, was for a time a Baptist minister and editor of the *Plainfield* (New Jersey) *Central New Jersey Times.*

5. In *Debs* (pp. 128-29), Karsner wrote that "any record of Eugene's life that omits Theodore is, in the final estimate, woefully incomplete."

6. B. W. Huebsch (1876-1964) was a New York City printer and publisher. His weekly, the *Freeman* (1920-24), merged with Viking Press in 1925. Among other works, Huebsch published James Joyce's *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man,* Sherwood Anderson's *Winesburg, Ohio,* and D. H. Lawrence's *New Poems.*

7. *The Lynching Bee and Other Poems* (1920) included "The Old Agitator," Leonard's tribute to Debs as "the good old man" who "lights (like Socrates) on no defense— Except reiteration of his cause." "The Old Agitator" first appeared in the *American Monthly* of December 1919.

George D. Herron to Theodore Debs

February 13, 1920
Geneva, Switzerland

Dear Brother Debs,

I can do no more than thank you for your letter of January 21st,[1] and to tell you how rejoiced I am at all the words of devotion and affection that have to lift up the beautiful soul of your beloved brother.

I often wonder if history in the past has been made as it is being made in these days. For instance, as to the inside history of the war, I had to do with this and I even had my part in decisions that were taken.[2] And I know that the peoples of no one nation have any idea whatever of the war. Every government is lying to the limit about everything that is sent abroad in the world. Every journal is lying to the limit. There exists no such thing as a free press, except for a few papers like the Nation.[3] The truth has absolutely departed from the world about everything. I know the facts about so many things and know how opposite they are to what the world is told, and I know how many things have been suppressed.

And we are getting deeper into this inferno of lies every day. There exists no such thing as news. There is only propaganda of the abominable sort.

I should be glad if you would let me hear from you from time to time. I cannot write you more today as I am overwhelmed with pulling every string I know of to try to arrange for the release of what is left of the million prisoners of different nations who are dying in camps in Turkestan,[4] dying at the rate of one to two thousand a day. Besides

that the doctor is trying to put me to bed for a week. In fact I have not had one day's actual rest for more than 3 years.

Affectionately yours,
George D. Herron

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Theodore Debs's letter to Herron of January 21, 1920, has not been found. He wrote Herron a long letter (four typed pages) on October 22, 1919, describing Debs's treatment at Moundsville and Atlanta, his health and loss of weight, and his "adamant spirit [which] is as far beyond [Wilson's and Palmer's] filthy touch as a star is above a mole hill." Stanford University Archives, Herron Papers.

2. Herron, who had written *Woodrow Wilson and the World's Peace* in 1917, attended the Paris Peace Conference in 1919 and worked to persuade Germany's representatives to trust Wilson's ability to secure favorable terms for Germany in the peace treaty.

3. The *Nation*, published in New York City, was edited at the time by Oswald Garrison Villard.

4. The fighting in the civil war between the Red and White armies in Turkestan in 1920-21 was accompanied by "a very severe famine . . . which cost over a million lives." David W. Treadgold, *Twentieth Century Russia* (Chicago, 1972), 193-94.

Mabel Dunlap Curry to Upton Sinclair

February 16, 1920
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Mr. Sinclair,

In my last packet of mail from Atlanta I had the following instruction:—"Please write Upton Sinclair and thank him for the autographed copy of the 'Brass Check'[1] just recd. and tell him it is monumental, and if he had not written another line, this supremely courageous and sorely-needed contribution to the world's emancipating literature would of itself secure his fame and place mankind under an everlasting obligation to him. I am reading the book with profound interest and appreciation and hope its eye-opening and thought-inspiring message may be spread over all the earth." This, with his love and best wishes, is the message I am happy to transmit to you from Gene. How much longer, my dear Mr. Sinclair, are we to endure this awful insult to our American ideals? I can scarcely believe it is real, but often suspect it is a nightmare from which the breaking of a new day will rescue me!

With cordial good wishes,
Mabel Dunlap Curry.

ALS, InU, Lilly Library, Sinclair MSS.

1. Sinclair's *Brass Check,* subtitled *A Study of American Journalism,* was published by Haldeman-Julius at Girard, Kansas, in 1919.

Scott Nearing to EVD

February 20, 1920
New York City

Dear Comrade:

Yesterday I received a note which you were thoughtful enough to send on to Theodore {and} which was forwarded to me. Thank you heartily. It is good to see a line from you again.

The other day I got a letter from the World Church Movement[1] asking me for a statement to be used in their campaign. Without asking your permission I decided to make you the hero of my little story to them. The result I am inclosing in this letter.[2]

During the past few months I have been around the country a great deal and have heard your name mentioned more than that of Mr. Wilson or anybody else for that matter. Even among your enemies it is mentioned with respect; among the comrades always with love and admiration.

Best wishes to you,

Yours truly,
Scott Nearing

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. The Interchurch World Movement of North America, organized in 1919 in New York City, sought, among other goals, religious liberty, industrial peace, and social justice. One of its first projects was an investigation of the great steel strike of 1919. *New York Times,* September 30; October 3, 10, 1919.

2. Nearing enclosed his letter to S. Earle Taylor, executive secretary of the Interchurch World Movement, dated February 17, 1920, in which he described "a man who loves every ragged street urchin; who would give the coat off his back and the blanket from his bed to any outcast in America . . . . His name is Eugene V. Debs."

Rose Weiss[1] to EVD

February 22, 1920
New York City

Dear Comrade Debs—

I haven't yet written you to tell you how much I have since thought of the wonderful visit I had with you Dec. 31st. On the day of my

return the famous raids[2] took place & I have been busy every day till almost Midnight looking after the defence of the victims, especially the hundreds arrested for deportation. We are all watching with keen interest the proceedings at Albany & wonder if they will be stupid enough to expel the 5 Assemblymen.[3] Should this happen it may do much to solidify the contending ranks in the radical movement.

The investigation of Martens[4] in Washington is progressing favorably & it is quite likely that a good many of the Senators have learned a few things.

Everyone here in New York and New Jersey sends his and her love to you. It hardly seems possible that much time will elapse before an amnesty will be declared. The winning over of the conservative labor unions will help a good deal I think.

There is not much activity in the S.P. here in Newark. I dont know how the other sections of the Country were affected but the split[5] has thoroughly demoralized the movement here. However high prices etc. are agitating for us much more effectively than tons of propaganda.

With much love to you.
Rose Weiss

[EVD note to Theodore Debs]

This young lady, a very fine and loyal comrade, came here for a visit last December. Pls. drop her a line and thank her for her kind remembrance and say to her that we appreciate her visit and that all the comrades here send her loving regards.

Anita Whitney[6] was convicted on but one count of her indictment. The rest of the counts were dismissed as unproved, "*but the six women on the jury were for conviction on every count.*" I have discovered where the Huns on both sides got the inspiration for their Christian methods of warfare. See II Kings 3:19,25.[7]

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Rose Weiss practiced law in New York City and lived in Newark, New Jersey. She left the Socialist party in 1921, joined the Workers party, and was that party's candidate for attorney general in New York in 1922.

2. The Palmer Raids on radical offices, meeting halls, and headquarters, carried out all over the country on January 2, 1920, rounded up some 4,000 suspects in thirty-three major cities in twenty-three states. Murray, *Red Scare*, 213.

3. On January 7, 1920, the New York state legislature voted 140 to 6 to deny seats to five socialist members of that body representing districts from New York City and vicinity on grounds that the socialists were revolutionary, unpatriotic, and disloyal.

4. Ludwig Karlovitch Martens (1878-1948) was a Russian engineer who lived in the United States from 1916 to 1921. Following the Russian Revolution in 1917, Martens served as an unofficial diplomatic representative of the Soviet government

in the United States and sought unsuccessfully to establish diplomatic and commercial relations between the two nations. Following a long series of hearings in New York City and Washington, held during the months of the Red Scare, Martens and his family were deported to Russia in January 1921. *New York Times*, October 22, 1948.

5. On March 4, 1920, Weiss wrote Debs to tell him that she thought that his acceptance of the Socialist party's 1920 presidential nomination would "do a great deal to unify the sadly disrupted ranks of the radical movement." InTI, Debs Collection.

6. Charlotte Anita Whitney (1867-1955) was a California peace activist, defender of Tom Mooney, IWW supporter, and socialist (she later joined the Communist party) who was convicted in 1920 under California's criminal syndicalist law of advocating violence to accomplish political change. After a long appeal process, Whitney's conviction was upheld by the Supreme Court in 1927, but she was pardoned by Governor Young of California.

7. The verses describe the fighting between the Moabites and Israelites, in which the land was destroyed, the water wells "stopped," and "all the good trees . . . felled."

J. W. Nishida[1] to EVD

March 10, 1920
Los Angeles, California

Dear Comrade and fellow-worker Debs:

Just a short letter to let you know that you have a comrade who think of you tho I be an I.W.W. and locked tight into a cold steal sell at Los Angeles Cal just for my loyalty to the cause of Industrial Socialism and for running Red International Book's. My bail is twenty-five thousand dollars I dont know Just when my trial will be however I am not loseing any sleep over it knowing as I do that there are no Justice to be goten from {a} capitalist court the enemy of the working class. And here I am to face them not onely as an I.W.W. or Bolshevik but Also as a yellow man from the Far East where only real bad men can come from.

I am not well to day my very life long for the great big green world Where I can breath fresh air and bath into the warm light of the sun, I trust you are well and strong and will live to see the Jail doors swing wide and we go marching on. I am giveing this letter to a boy {to mail for me} who are going to get his freedom to day I hope he will mail it right away.

I am yours Always
J. W. Nishida

[EVD note to Theodore Debs] Aug. 2

Pls. be sure to answer this soon as possible. You see it was written

in Los Angeles Co Jail March 10, was mailed in *N.Y.* July 31st (see other side of this) and only reached me today. It probably took the bearer all that time to get to N.Y. Tell him about delay & say to him that I appreciate his brave spirit, hail him comrade in the great struggle and wish for him & his comrades speedy release and a brighter future.

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. In the *Liberator* (March 1920), Max Eastman described Jothar Nishida as "one of the most faithful, energetic, and intelligent distributors of radical literature in this country." He had been indicted "for no crime whatever but that of conducting a wonderful Red International Book Store" in Los Angeles, had no money, and was being held under excessive bail. "Whether you are a writer, or a publisher, or only a reader of radical and true literature, he has served you," Eastman wrote, asking readers to send Nishida "some token of your appreciation."

Alex Rahming to EVD

March 15, 1920
New York City

My dear Comrade Gene:—

"I am indeed thrilled and overjoyed today, not because my position as a worker has improved, but because you, who stands for truth and justice, You who are suffering untold agonies, Yes I am happy, because you, who would gladly give life itself, that humanity may be free, has given your consent to become a Presidential Candidate[1] and may God grant the workers sufficient intelligence to see the light, that the doors that are now locked will fly open, and our Gene will egress to Washington and be crowned lord of all.

I am a Colored man, and although my race has every right to protest, yet we in the social field know, that the present system can only survive by encourageing prejudice based upon religion, race or Nationality however as dumb as many of us are, we will be forced to see the fallacy of supporting a regime, that will keep the masses in illiteracy for their security.

Gene, many months before your imprisonment, you wrote an article in the Call entitled, "the american negro,"[2] may I take this opportunity to confess my appreciation of your frankness and to inform you, that in my public talk, the workers of Color, were informed and I hope that they will show their appreciation at the polls, but my Chief Concern is my brothers in the {dark} South who has been feed upon

lies but let us hope, that they will awaken, and make this in truth the land of the free. Wishing you continuous health

I am your Comrade,
Alex Rahming

I am going to try and secure a hall for April 13th to protest against your imprisonment, so if possible reply.

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Following an interview with Debs in Atlanta on March 12, David Karsner announced in the *Call* (March 14, 1920) Debs's "tentative" willingness to accept the party's presidential nomination in 1920.

2. Debs's "The Negro: His Present Status and Outlook," which appeared in the *Intercollegiate Socialist* (April-May 1918), was widely reprinted in the socialist press. In the article Debs praised William E. B. Du Bois's "The Problem of Problems," which had appeared earlier in the *Intercollegiate Socialist* (December 1917-January 1918), and added his opinion that "the whole history of the American slave trade and of African slavery in the United States . . . is black with infamy and crime against the negro, which the white race can never atone for in time or eternity." "The negro is my brother," Debs said, and his "salvation . . . lies within himself," and "the Socialist who will not speak out fearlessly for the negro's right to work and live, to develop his manhood, educate his children, and fulfill his destiny on terms of equality with the white man misconceives the movement he pretends to serve or lacks the courage to live up to its principles."

David Karsner to Theodore Debs

March 16, 1920
New York City

My dear Theodore:

I have been searching for this minute to write to you for three days.

I was very pleasantly surprised to find Gene look so well.[1] I am not exaggerating to you when I say that Gene looked better to me than at any time I have seen him since he has been away. His eyes are clear and he has good color. He told me that he was in very good condition, and I have every reason to believe that Gene is in good condition at present. Our interview took place in the warden's private office and lasted for the better part of an hour. I was able to deliver to Gene the package of cake from Phil Reinbold and the candy from Baur. I also delivered into his hands the primary election document which you asked me to give to Gene. Doubtless you have seen The Call by now and so you are aware that Gene signed the returned

receipt and said to me that he would place himself at the service of the Socialist Party this year in any manner that the party saw fit to use him. More pointedly than that however, Gene said that he would not oppose his own candidacy for President.

He spoke of you at length and also of your wife and Marguerite with great affection. The first thing he asked me was if I had been to his home, and how Mrs. Debs was. I followed your suggestion in this matter, and Gene seemed relieved over the information that Mrs. Debs was improved.

Curiously enough Theodore, I looked in four book stores in Atlanta for Dreiser's Hoosier Holiday[2] but without success. I know exactly where I can lay my hands on one here, and shall do so just as soon as I am a bit caught up with my work. I know you will enjoy at least some parts if not all of this hoosier story.

I know that you will not hesitate to call on me in any manner shape or form that I can serve you, and I shall at all times hold myself in readiness for your call.

Love to you always.
Dave
Per R. K.

P.S. May I add my little share of love too? I have never seen you, but Dave brought your spirit with him into the home and introduced me to it. I feel now as though I have known you and your family and Gene—our Gene—and Mrs. K. Debs for years and years.

Rose Karsner.[3]

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Karsner interviewed Debs at Atlanta on March 13, 1919, and reported (*Call*, March 14, 1919) that Debs "signified that he would accept the nomination for President of the United States" by "signing his name" on the proof ballot for Michigan's presidential primary election, which was scheduled for April 5.

2. Theodore Dreiser (1871-1945) was born in Terre Haute, where he lived for seven years and knew the worst of that town's poverty. His family lived in several other Indiana towns before settling in Warsaw, Indiana, in 1884, and in 1887, Dreiser left home for Chicago. After spending one year (1889-90) at Indiana University, Dreiser returned to Chicago, where he became a reporter for the *Chicago Globe*, the first of several newspapers on which he worked during the following decade before the publication of *Sister Carrie* (1900) launched his career as a major novelist whose works by World War I included *Jennie Gerhardt* (1911), *The Financier* (1912), *The Titan* (1914), and *The "Genius"* (1915). *Hoosier Holiday*, published in 1916, was an account of Dreiser's automobile trip from New York City to the various Indiana towns—Terre Haute, Sullivan, Evansville, and others—he knew as a youth.

3. David Karsner's wife.

Rose Pastor Stokes to Theodore Debs

March 22, 1920
New York City

My dear Theodore Debs:

Many warm thanks for the thoughtfulness expressed in the sending of press clipping from your local paper in re the reversal in my case.[1]

Of course, the matter has little significance. They have framed much more repressive and reactionary laws and have infinitely better cases against the real radicals now. I am satisfied to be tried anew—on real issues,—and to go to prison for big principles will be truly a privilege. In the class conflict we must expect that more rather than decreased repression will be the outlook. We should not be deceived or fall back into a state of {passivity} in our propaganda because such camouflaged decisions {(as in my case in K.C.)[2] look} like a straw in a "liberal" wind.

Cordially always,
Rose Pastor Stokes.

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Stokes's ten-year sentence for violation of the Espionage Act was overturned by the United States Court of Appeals in St. Louis in March 1920.
2. Kansas City.

Edna King[1] to EVD

March 23, 1920
Washington, D.C.

Dear Comrade Debs:

I don't know why I haven't written you in all these long months we have been unable to see you. Our hearts have been full with love for you and pride in your magnificent—not sacrifice to you I know, but service to a cause and people you love.

A few nights ago we had a wonderful meeting, and I want to tell you of it, because we all felt your nearness. A bunch of the finest comrades ever assembled together met to celebrate the first anniversary of the Russian Soviet Government's mission in America, on the invitation of Comrade Martens. There was nothing startling in the meeting, or nothing to shock Mitchy Palmer,[2] though one of his agents sat just outside the door. 'Twas a heart to heart rejoicing over the

progress of mankind in Russia. You were missed, and upon mention of your name there was one of the most loving ovations given you that I've ever heard.

You won't mind my telling you, will you Debs, that you are more loved and admired than ever before.

Spurgeon Odell told us of his two visits with you, and of your kind inquiry of Murray and myself. I've tried to write you several times, but each time fill up—with indignation or sadness that such a thing could happen in this "civilization" as that you would be in prison.

We loved the stories of Red Massey and the others down there, and of the loving sympathetic touch you have given to those old prison walls.

As you will note by the address of this, Murray and I are in Washington; came here the early part of January. Murray is writing a book, the first opportunity for the necessary leisure he has had in all these years to do the thing he wants to do—and this isn't entirely that. He has some wonderful poems in him, and a philosophical work, but they are having to wait just now.

It's a unique thing here in America to write a letter which will pass a prison censor. I'm not sure this will be successful; I hope so, if for no other reason than to tell you that we both love you dearly and will be so happy to have you out here with us again.

Lovingly,
Edna King.

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Edna King's husband, Murray King, was a poet and writer who later served as editor of the *American Appeal,* which Debs launched in 1926.

2. Alexander Mitchell Palmer (1872-1936) was a Pennsylvania Quaker who became one of the state's leading lawyers before he was elected Democratic congressman in 1908. His support of Woodrow Wilson in 1912 led to various posts in the Wilson administration, including his 1919 appointment as attorney general. During the last two years of Wilson's presidency, Palmer's greatest notoriety rose from his campaign against alleged domestic radicalism, which played an important part in the Red Scare of 1919-20. In January 1921, Palmer recommended to President Wilson that Debs's sentence be commuted to time served but Wilson refused. National Archives, Records of the Office of Pardon Attorney, Record Group 204; Record of Pardon Cases, Vol. 35, p. 386.

David Karsner to Theodore Debs

March 30, 1920
New York City

My Dear Theodore:—

My publishers have just told me that the magazine published by the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers[1] have refused to accept a quarter page paid advertisement of the DEBS book. Isn't that sweet irony? And from it cannot many inferences be drawn? Is there a LABOR movement in America? Where in heaven's name is it? In a day or two I shall match "A Hoosier Holiday," which I sent to you a few days ago, with "Twelve Men," one of Dreiser's very best books and containing a beautiful figure article about his brother, Paul, whom you knew, and the story of "On The Banks Of The Wabash," and "Just Tell Them That You Saw Me."[2]

Love to Mrs. Debs, your daughter, and for yourself, you know what I feel in my heart.

David Karsner
Two Beekman Place,
New York City,

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Published in Cleveland, the *Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers Journal* was edited at the time by Charles H. Salmons.

2. Dreiser's *Twelve Men*, published in 1919, included a sympathetic biographical sketch of Paul Dresser (1857-1906), Dreiser's older brother, a popular songwriter. The sketch includes Dreiser's description of the background to the composition of "On the Banks of the Wabash" and "Just Tell Them That You Saw Me," two of Dresser's most popular songs.

Frank P. Walsh to EVD

April 1920
New York City

Dear Sir:

Under separate cover, I am sending you a copy of George Creel's[1] book entitled "Ireland's Fight for Freedom," and other publications.

The justice of Ireland's claim to the restoration of her Sovereign Independence is irrefutable.

Might I ask you to kindly acknowledge the receipt of same?

Yours very truly,
FRANK P. WALSH
Chairman.

[EVD note to Theodore Debs]

Pls. say to Mr. Walsh that his kindness in sending the books is fully appreciated, but that I doubt if the rules will permit them to reach me. Should they come later, prompt acknowledgment will be made. Mr. Walsh need hardly be assured that I sympathize with him in the brave fight he is making and that I earnestly hope that early victory may crown his efforts.[2]

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. George Creel (1876-1953) was born in rural Missouri and worked on various western newspapers before being named head of the government's Committee on Public Information in 1917. During World War I, he became the nation's chief propagandist and press censor, roles in which he effectively generated enthusiasm for the war ("Uncle Sam's Press Agent") and regulated the flow of war news ("the uncensorious censor"). Creel's *Ireland's Fight For Freedom* was published in 1919.

2. After serving as chairman of the Commission on Industrial Relations from 1913 to 1915, Walsh was editor and publisher of the *Kansas City Post* from 1915 to 1917, served on the War Labor Board, and was admitted to the New York bar in 1919. He was a leader, among Americans, in the Irish independence movement.

Scott Nearing to EVD

April 3, 1920
New York City

Dear Comrade,—

Day before yesterday Comrade Henry (Indiana),[1] who has come in here to take charge of work in the Bronx, was telling us about your work in Atlanta. He says that your influence inside the prison is growing—just as it is growing outside. There is nothing like courage & honesty & love to win respect & admiration—anywhere.

The next time you write to Theodore, will you, if convenient, enclose a line, introducing me to your friends in France & England. It need be nothing more than a line in the corner of an Envelope. Theodore can send it on to me. I hope to get across the water for a few weeks this Spring & a word from you would help.[2]

International affairs seem to be moving very swiftly.—I fear toward another armed conflict. I am anxious to do what I can—while there is yet time—to avert or at least to warn with regard to the impending catastrophe.

Love & best wishes from us all. Our two boys[3] know you well. We have one of the relief-placks by Louis Mayer. & they will be able to tell you in a crowd when they see you. In School the boys learn that this is a free country, at home they have a chance to look at your picture, to learn that you are in jail & why. They will grow up—at least better Educated than some of us older folk.

Scott Nearing

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. William H. Henry was state secretary of the Socialist party in Indiana, a member of the national executive committee, and later national executive secretary. Henry's account of his visit to Debs at Atlanta in October 1919 was widely published in the socialist press (*St. Louis Labor,* November 8, 1919).

2. Nearing's *Europe in Revolution,* based on his trip to Europe, was published in October 1920 by the Rand School of Social Science. Excerpts appeared in the *New Day,* the national party paper, and other socialist publications in the fall and winter of 1920-21.

3. John and Robert Nearing. See John Nearing to EVD, December 24, 1920.

Otto Branstetter to EVD

April 13, 1920
Chicago, Illinois

DEAR GENE,

IN THE NAME OF MILLIONS WHOM YOU HAVE TOUCHED WITH YOUR LOVE AND INSPIRED BY YOUR COURAGE THE SOCIALIST PARTY SENDS YOU FRATERNAL GREETINGS AND THIS MESSAGE OF LOVE ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF YOUR INCARCERATION WHO IN A FELONS CELL YOU ARE TOO GREAT A MAN TOO MAGNIFICENT A CHARACTER TO RECEIVE OUR PITY YOU HAVE INSTEAD OUR ADMIRATION LOYALTY AND LOVE BY YOUR COURAGE AND EXAMPLE YOU HAVE HEARTENED THE DISHEARTENED ENCOURAGED AND GIVEN NEW ENTHUSIAM TO THOSE WHO HAVE NEVER WAVERED IN YOUR PRISON CELL YOU ARE A BEACON LIGHT TO THE SUFFERING MASSES AND YOUR WORDS ARE WINGED MESSENGERS THAT ARE AROUSING THE PEOPLE FROM THEIR SLUMBER THE SPIRIT OF OUR MOVEMENT IS ABROAD IN THE LAND THE DAY OF OUR VICTORY APPROACHES WE GREET YOU WE GRASP YOUR HAND RESOLVED

THAT WE YOUR COMRADES SHALL STRIVE TO LIVE AS YOU HAVE LIVED SINGLE MINDEDLY DEVOTED TO THE WORKERS CAUSE TO THE END THAT THE WORLD MAY AT LAST BE FREE.

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
OTTO BRANSTETTER
EXECUTIVE SECTY

Telegram, InTI, Debs Collection.

David Weiss[1] to EVD

April 13, 1920
Madison, Wisconsin

Dear Comrade:

On behalf of a group of 21 students at the University of Wisconsin, who met tonight to enquire as to the reason why there are still men and women languishing in American jails, for having expressed contrary political or economic views, and especially after all other countries have already released their political prisoners, allow me to send you and your true comrades our most sincerest and heartfelt greetings and hope that you will all soon be released, for you surely have committed no crime.

Of our little group, some are socialists,[2] others liberals; but we are all imbued with the spirit of justice, brotherhood, and the slogan: "Above all nations, humanity!" Further, let me assure you that there are at least several other students and members of the faculty at the university who feel exactly the same way. And there is nothing that we would like better than to be able to grip your hardy hand, which, incontrovertably, has befriended many, and personally express our deep-felt love and respect for your undaunted courage and loyalty to the principle of universal peace. And for twelve long months you have stood upright, with torch in hand, spreading love, hopefulness, and ideals for a coming democracy.

For years you and your imprisoned comrades have preached the message of true Christianity; yet today, professed Christians scorn you and refuse even to lift a voice in protest against the inhumane treatment accorded to the brave-hearted men and women who believed that the Commandment, "Thou shalt not kill" is as inviolable today as it was two thousand years ago. And for preaching this gospel they have jailed you, and silenced you so that the masses may not hear you. But those who have persecuted you have been allowed, and are

doing so today, to coin unlimited profits from the suffering, misery, and anguish of millions of innocent men, women, and children, not only in America, but in every country in Europe. And today we find these very same individuals attempting to crush unmercifully all opinions that threaten their usurped power.

Comrade Debs, keep up your indomitable courage! They have jailed you, but your imperishable ideas are spreading so rapidly that a most terrible fear has been thrown into the heartless reactionaries—the enemies of democracy. And there are many more young men and women students at the University of Wisconsin, as well as in many other colleges and universities in America, who are preparing themselves with knowledge so that they will be able to take their place in our struggling society and help make this world a better one for all peoples.

Comrade, have heart! Many of us are ready to take up your great burden, which you have borne for so many years. We are ready to do our share to help make this country a truly democratic land, industrially, politically, and socially, in other words, a universal brotherhood.

Accept our most sincerest wishes for your good health and for a speedy release of all political prisoners.

Yours for socialism,
David Weiss

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. David Weiss was born in Austria and grew up in New York City, where his father was a dentist. Weiss was admitted to the University of Wisconsin as a special student in 1915 despite the fact that his preparatory work, including two years of English and composition at the Rand School, was considered by the university registrar to be exceedingly limited. Weiss earned a bachelor's degree (1919) and master's degree (1920) in economics. David Weiss File, Alumni Records Office, Bureau of Graduate Records, University of Wisconsin.

2. In his letter seeking admission to the University of Wisconsin, Weiss said that he had been "editor of *The People's Voice,* a socialist and labor weekly newspaper of Rockford, Illinois" and that he wanted "an education not for ostentatious or monetary purposes, but to be better equipped to help the needy people to help themselves." Weiss to William Dixon Hiestand, University Registrar and Secretary of the Faculty, ibid.

John Haynes Holmes to EVD

April 14, 1920
New York City

Dear Mr. Debs:

On this anniversary of mingled shame and glory—shame for America and glory for yourself!—I want to join my voice to the chorus which is being lifted throughout the country in your praise. It is a profoundly moving spectacle to see the love and reverance which is everywhere felt for you, not only among the workers but also to an ever increasing degree among those to whom your name in the old days was anathema. The perfect courage and simplicity with which you registered your protest against the Great War, the noble way in which you have endured the bitter trial of your imprisonment, the characteristic manner in which you have identified yourself with the hundreds of others in prison, have all served to teach to men the truth. I have never seen a better illustration of the utter futility of punishment and force as a weapon of oppression. Thanks to the government, you today exercise an influence and hold the love of myriads which never otherwise would have come to you.

It was with profound relief and satisfaction that I read in yesterday's Call the announcement that you are to be transferred from the Atlanta prison to a farm colony.[1] I am confident that the day of your release is not far distant as the signs are multiplying that the tide is beginning to turn in this country, but during such time as must still remain, I assume that this change of environment will be beneficial in every way.

On next Friday night, I am to have the honor of speaking at a public meeting here for your release.[2] I know that I shall be true to your spirit in pleading not only for yourself but for all political offenders who are now in prison.

As always,

Very sincerely yours,
John Haynes Holmes

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Debs's transfer "to a farm several miles from the prison" was approved by Warden Zerbst following a visit from the American Federation of Labor amnesty committee, whose members also persuaded the warden to grant Debs "the boon of several hours of automobiling around the city unguarded and free." *Call*, April 13, 1920. The Debs Collection in Cunningham Memorial Library at Indiana State University contains a number of photographs taken of Debs at the Atlanta farm by Lucy Robins, AFL staff member and leader in the amnesty movement.

2. Holmes was scheduled to speak at an amnesty rally at the Central Opera House. It was sponsored by the New York Socialist party, the AFL Central Labor Conference, and the American Civil Liberties Union. *Call,* April 8, 1920.

George D. Herron to Theodore Debs

April 16, 1920
Geneva, Switzerland

My dear Theodore:

I am only just back from a long journey of three weeks and I find your letter of 22nd March awaiting me along with a good many others. I have only time for a word, but I want to tell your how profoundly grateful I am to know that Gene's condition is better. One of the first things I shall do, of course, when I come to America[1] is to visit him, whether he is in Atlanta or back home.

I have not received Karsner's book about Gene. He may have sent it, but I think no one in America realizes how irregular and uncertain is the international postal service. Even letters are often long delayed and many of them never reach their destination. The French postal system is hopelessly disorganized and I imagine that when letters accumulate they are simply burned.

Things are drifting from worse to worse in all European countries, except possibly in Italy. Italy is the only country in which I see the possibility of a great social change, of a new society growing up in the midst of the falling ruins of the old.[2] Because of the peculiar temperament of the people it is possible that a true cooperative commonwealth may be gradually built up in Italy with comparatively little bloodshed. It is only a possibility, but the possibility is there. And I do not see it elsewhere.

I am daily more and more convinced that we are at the beginning of a complete disintegration of western civilization. It will not so much be destroyed root and branch, as it will utterly dissolve. Millions will perish from starvation and from sporadic revolts, and I fear we are in for a period of darkness and desperation such as will make the war, when looked back upon, seem as a comparatively pleasant prelude. The only value left for this civilization is that of fertilization of the human soil whence after a generation—perhaps after a century of unimaginable sorrow and suffering—a free and lovely world-order will yet come, and it will be something approaching the Christ ideal of the kingdom of heaven.

But this cannot come so long as the old is in the way. This civilization

has in it no power of self-regeneration. It is only fit to be cast out of human consideration. Nor do I see anything in the old socialist movement, among the leaders of the old or Second International,[3] that promises anything better. The spirit of all these differs not from the spirit of capitalism, either in moral quality or intellectual capacity. It will take an entirely new and more synthetic labor movement, an entirely new view of life, to bring about this world-order.

Please give my love to Gene and tell him I hope before many months to see him.

Affectionately yours,
George D. Herron

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Herron did not return to the United States before his death in October 1925.

2. Beginning in 1920, Herron's writings in the European and American press increasingly stressed his belief that Italy was a final utopian hope for mankind, destined to become "a more Christly society than the world has yet known." "George Davis Herron," *Dictionary of American Biography.*

3. At the outbreak of the war in Europe in 1914, the Second International broke down into its constituent parties, each supporting its national government.

Adolph F. Germer to Theodore Debs

April 19, 1920
Washington, D.C.

My dear Theodore:—

Ever since I left "Gene" I have been kept busy hopping trains so that it has been impossible to write you.

As you suggested, I gave him a careful "once over" and truly he looks good. I saw him Tuesday and Wednesday.[1] He showed not only a good spirit and a good color (anything but pale), but he also showed a good physical condition. I asked him how much he weighed and he said 175 pounds. In response to my question as to how he felt he replied "like a young lion just coming of age. I wish I had a platform and 10,000 people to talk to."

My personal impression is, from all that I observed, that there is "something in the wind." The fact that he was taken out of prison for an auto ride, that we were allowed to see him for several consecutive days without the slightest word of complaint is the forerunner of some early move [on] the part of the powers that be.

I am here trying to learn what I can. Tried to see W.B. Wilson[2]

to-day but failed. Tomorrow I am to see a member of his family. May also drop around A.F. of L. headquarters and see Frank Morrison.[3] That crowd has interested itself in the political prisoners and they may know something.

Was told today that there is not a very friendly feeling between Mrs. Wilson[4] and her son-in-law—McAdoo.[5] She is charged with being one of the Chief British agents in the country while McAdoo is anti-British and these two are scarcely on speaking terms—that Wilson's daughter did not visit him while he was sick, because the feeling between her and the lady of the White House, who is frequently referred to as "the President" is so strained. Mrs. Wilson is supposed to be chiefly responsible for McAdoo's resignation as Secretary of the Treasury. This alleged pro-British sentiment of Mrs Wilson may explain why nothing has so far been done in the way of amnesty.

Will write you again in a few days. Am going to New York for a while. Address c/o East 15th St.[6]

With every good wish I am as ever

Faithfully yours
Adolph Germer

P.S. I did not get the package of literature at Atlanta. The Gerhardt sisters received what you sent them.

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Germer described his talks with Debs at Atlanta on April 13 and 14, 1920, in "Germer Visits Debs," Socialist party *Bulletin*, May 1, 1920.

2. William Bauchop Wilson, secretary of labor from 1913 to 1921.

3. Frank Morrison was secretary of the AFL.

4. Edith Bolling Galt Wilson (1872-1961) married President Wilson in 1915, was his constant companion and adviser thereafter, and was believed to have played a decisive role in "screening" Wilson's access to public issues following his stroke in October 1919.

5. William Gibbs McAdoo (1863-1941) married Eleanor Randolph Wilson, the president's daughter, in 1914; served as secretary of the Treasury from 1913 to 1919; and was for a time considered for the Democratic presidential nomination in 1920. His effort to secure the nomination four years later resulted in a deadlock with New York Governor Al Smith and a 103-ballot convention, at the end of which the nomination went to John W. Davis. McAdoo served as United States senator from California from 1933 to 1939.

6. The Rand School (People's House) address.

Father Martin O'Donoghue[1] to EVD

April 20, 1920
Washington, D.C.

Dear Comrade,

There is nothing I can send you in the way of literature for no doubt you are well supplied with newspapers, magazines, etc. nor can I add anything to augment the meed of love and good wishes that follow you always, but perhaps you have not a copy of the Following of Christ with you and so I am sending you one I have at hand. It is so replete with soul experiences of one who shows he has tried hard to get into communication with that inner self that finds it hard to get in command of the outward things that surround this present life, I am sure you will find something of refreshment in it. The third book to me is a pretty close bit of psychological study.

I know you are asking of God, the Fount of all being, what we are all asking, clear-sightedness, full strength, and unbounded faith that right, justice, truth and love will prevail, and that we shall never be wanting in anything that shall hasten its era.

From time to time I shall drop you a line, trusting not to weary you, but to reassure you that "alls well," and where spirit with spirit may meet, stone walls and iron bars make no impediment to our being with you.

God bless and keep you forever!

Yours fraternally,
Martin O'Donoghue

[EVD note to Theodore Debs]

This very kind letter is from a Catholic priest—Rev. Father Martin O'Donoghue—a member of the Socialist local at Washington. He made a special trip here to see me last winter.[2] Pls. drop him a line and thank him for his kind and inspiring message—also thank him for the book & tell him if I receive it I will give it careful reading.

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Father Martin O'Donoghue (d. 1924) was a socialist Catholic priest in Washington, D.C., and, according to a 1919 Federal Bureau of Investigation report on his activities, a "professor of Economics in the Columbia Preparatory School for Boys" in Washington. His activities as a socialist and an advocate of amnesty for political prisoners are the subject of a number of reports in the National Archives, Records of the War Department General Staff, Record Group 165, and Records of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Record Group 65.

2. A letter from Attorney General Palmer's secretary to Warden Zerbst, dated November 16, 1919, asks Zerbst to "please give Reverend Martin O'Donoghue opportunity to interview Debs." National Archives, Records of the Department of Justice, Record Group 60, File 77175.

Lucy Robins[1] to EVD

April 24, 1920
New York City

My Dear Comrade Debs:—

I know that I should have written to you before, and believe me I wanted to, but I know that you will forgive me because you fully realize that in my work for a general amnesty it means more work than play. I haven't had an hour to spare since I visited with you. In fact, I only run into New York for a day or two to attend to the most important matters and then run out again.

I addressed the Cigarmakers Convention, and brought your greetings and message to them. Mr. Gompers presided while I spoke, and after I was through he assured the delegates that he is doing and will do all in his power to help bring about a general amnesty.

I have helped to organize the Citizens Amnesty Committee which consists of Mrs. Champ Clark,[2] Mrs. La Follete,[3] Basil Manly and others, who left a memorial at the White House for President Wilson.

I have addressed since I have seen you meetings of Central Bodies, District Councils and Local Unions almost daily and always get good results.

Local Unions throughout the Country are now receiving letters from Senators & Congressmen of their own districts pledging support to the France Joint Resolutions.[4] Washington is astir on the question of general amnesty. You can rest assured Dear Comrade that we won't leave a stone unturned until a general amnesty is declared.

Mr. Carsner of the "Call" must have visited you after we did. He surely made a mess of things, with his statement to the Call.[5] We know that all news in the press is painted. Our statement too, was painted to a great extent in the Atlanta Georgia press, but there is a limit even to press exaggeration. Gerber, Solomon, Lee, O'Neil[6] and many many others feel very badly about the statement that Carsner wrote in your name, particularly in reference to the question of an amalgamation of all branches. They feel that you never did give him the statement as he wrote it.[7] However, I guess we cannot avoid breaks of this kind at any time.

I think you ought to feel proud to know that in many shops the workers are busy making suits, shirts, ties and many other things for you. We know that you don't want it but I am sure that if you would only know the spirit that prompts them to do it you would feel happy indeed.

I am awaiting impatiently for information to know whether you are already on that beautiful farm, which is the dream of Mr. Zerbst, and if so, I am sure you are enjoying the green fields, the budding trees, the well fed stock and the newly born little chicks.

I am very much desirous of getting a letter from you about all these details. I will write to Mr. Zerbst, whom I found very considerate and ask him that if possible to grant a special privilege to you to write me a long letter.

I will try to write to you as often as I can and give you information about the progress we are making.

Accept the loving heart throbs of thousands of your friends. We feel very hopeful that we will have you with us soon. With the best of all good wishes, I am

Sincerely yours,
Lucy Robins

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Lucy Fox Robins (1882-1962) was born in the Ukraine, brought to the United States by her parents in the late 1880s, and worked as a young girl in a Chicago cigar factory, where she became interested in anarchism and later the more conservative ideas of the American Federation of Labor, whose national staff she joined during World War I. At this time Robins was serving as executive secretary of the New York Central Labor Bodies Conference For The Release of Political Prisoners and was a leader in the AFL's amnesty campaign. As noted, she had visited Debs at Atlanta earlier in April 1920. In *War Shadows* (1922), Robins published her account of the amnesty movement, and in 1948 Macmillan published her autobiography, *Tomorrow Is Beautiful.* She married Harry Lang, a writer for the *Jewish Daily Forward,* in 1932. Some eighty letters written by Debs to Robins during and after Debs's imprisonment provide valuable insights into the workings and dissensions of the amnesty campaign.

2. Genevieve Bennett Clark (1855-1937) was the wife of the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Champ Clark, and mother of United States Senator Bennett Clark of Missouri. A leader in the woman-suffrage movement, Mrs. Clark was an outspoken critic of the Wilson administration's policy toward "political prisoners" and a strong supporter of the amnesty campaign.

3. Belle Case La Follette (1859-1931) was the wife of Robert M. La Follette. She held A.B. and law degrees from the University of Wisconsin, for many years edited the home and education departments of *La Follette's Magazine,* and played an active role in the woman-suffrage movement.

4. Joseph Irwin France (1873-1939) was United States senator from Maryland from 1917 to 1923. A Republican, France introduced in the Senate in March 1920 a series of resolutions calling for the release of "all prisoners whose religious, political,

or economic beliefs only . . . formed the basis of their prosecution, trial, or imprisonment under the Espionage Act." *New York Times*, March 11, 1920.

5. In "Gompers Wishes Brought to Debs" (*Call*, April 14, 1920), Karsner described Debs as grateful for Gompers's interest in amnesty but "surprised," considering their long-standing differences. Karsner concluded that "Debs is Debs and Gompers is Gompers and their lines lie far apart, as far as the distance between Socialism and craft unionism."

6. Julius Gerber; Charles Solomon, one of the five socialists expelled from the New York state legislature; Algernon Lee; and James Oneal.

7. In his April 14 article in the *Call*, Karsner wrote that "Debs said there could never be anything between [Debs and Gompers] as long as Gompers remained the kind of labor leader he has chosen to be during all of his presidency."

Edward G. Hill[1] to EVD

April 27, 1920
Guelph, Ontario, Canada

My Dear Comrade,

Greetings to you and more power to you. I am more prouder of you to-day than ever I was and every person knows I always loved you and talked of you everywhere But to-day in these unsettled times, when the Truth is not the Truth, when a liar is held in high esteem, beside a Brother who always put Truth, Love and Reason on the highest pillar of Social Science, My Dear Comrade I congratulate you on your splendid courage and bravery. The world will have to take its hat off to you. It must extend its open arms to you and call you Brother and Comrade, Hero and Martyr Prophet and Seer.

I told you I believe in a past letter that I would sooner be Gene Debs going to prison for ten years, than be President Wilson going to the Peace Conference, yes ten thousand times I prefer your place, but you are the winner they are the loosers and well you have earned every word of cheer and emulation that can be said or written of you. But my Comrade May Day is nearly here again the world is rocking, Capitalism is cracked every way, everybody everywhere is holding their breath, Something terrific is pending swinging in the balance, and a gigantic crash is coming not in a thousand years, but right away, and I believe that Nature has choosen you, (*Some Call it God*) to perform and do exactly what you are doing in these exacting days, as it did for Socrates, and thousands of other brave men.

Be brave Comrade You have got the Capitalists beaten in a thousand ways and they know it, Lincoln (brave Soul), Grant, Lee, George Washington, and John Brown are not candles to you in this class war

and Catyclysm of moneymad and crazy all powerful blood sucking days, They all done their part but you have captivated the climax of it all, and before you are finished with your noble work, you will of learned of the gratitude and Love and Kindness that you so bravely have fought for from the entire world, you will see that your work is well done and that you have done a glorious part in making the world Safe for the millions and millions yet unborn.

Brush up, cheer up, the world of Reason and Right is going to set you free, and often I think of you as I read of (The Prisoner of Chillon)[2] when he used to make friends of his chains, and the spiders, the mice and the stone mute walls, and so it will be with you I presume for you have such a powerful power of attraction, such a loving winning magnetism, that even the most heartless piece of inorganic matter will miss you going away.

As I said before in this letter be not discouraged you have them beat and they have got too come to you. Now, the time is short, Goodby for the present and God bless you till I write again,[3]

From your Comrade
Edward G. Hill
Dairy Dept
O. A. C.

P.S. Theodore Dear Comrade do not answear this letter for I know you have plenty to do.

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. A pay list dated May 15, 1920, in the archives of the University of Guelph lists Hill as an engineer at Ontario Agricultural College, now a part of the university. A document titled "Monies Received and Disbursed During Prison Days" (InTI, Debs Collection), lists a two-dollar contribution from "E. G. Hill" in March 1921.

2. Lord Byron's poem dealing with the imprisonment (1530-36) of a Geneva patriot, Bonnivard, for his efforts to overthrow the duke of Savoy and establish a free republic.

3. In a letter to Debs, October 3, 1921, Hill invited Debs to "recuperate from your long hard fight for freedom" at his home in Toronto. InTI, Debs Collection.

David Karsner to EVD

April 27, 1920
New York City

My Dear Beloved Comrade Gene:—

I hope you have not thought that I have been negligent in my duty to you. Indeed, I have not been idle a moment since my return to

New York after visiting with you in prison. As you commissioned me to go to Ohio to see some of the comrades there I take it for granted that you want to know what was accomplished. I wish I might be able to report to you something in the way of tangible achievement.

I went to Terre Haute immediately upon leaving Atlanta and visited with Theodore and your wife, both of whom, I am happy to say, I found in good spirits, brave and true and loyal to the last breath, and waiting eagerly for some cheering word that would mean to them your home-coming. I was two days in Terre Haute and spent a little while with some of your old friends, the Stevens', the Reinbolds, Mrs. Curry, Theodore's family who were lovely in their hospitality to me. While there I took a little snap shot of Theodore and Mrs. Curry, and I am sending them herewith. I trust the prison censor will permit the passage of these little tokens to you.

On Sunday, April 18th I was in Cleveland and met at the Gillsy House,[1] Mrs. Prevy, Elmer Allison, editor of The Toiler,[2] and another comrade whose name I believe is Brounstaub.[3] Allison and Brounstaub were members of the C.L.P. The Toiler is the official organ of the C.L.P. and the editor is the brother-in-law of Alfred Wagenknecht. Tom Clifford[4] was to be present, but as he had a meeting to hold he could not make our conference.

I reported in full to Mrs. Prevy, Allison and Brounstab what you had said to me in prison concerning unity of the socialist movement. I read to them my report of my talks with you, and after concluding my reading inquired if the C.L.P. would accept an invitation from the S.P. to send their fraternal delegates to the party convention. Allison and Brounstab replied without hesitancy that Coldwell[5] did not speak for the C.L.P., that Coldwell was out of touch with the situation, and that there could never be unity between the two factions. I asked Allison and Brounstab point blank if they thought the C.L.P. membership would support the socialist presidential ticket, and Allison replied that if you accepted the nomination from the socialist party it would become the duty of the C.L.P. to use its speakers and its papers to oppose you as the socialist candidate for president.

Both of these men took the position that it was your duty to declare yourself as between the socialist party and the C.L.P.[6] They represented themselves to me as speaking for the rank and file of their party. On the other hand, Mrs. Prevy denied to me that either of these spokesmen had a rank and file and said the position which they took in the matter was their own personal expression. Mrs. Prevey declared to me that she had been speaking in several states, especially in Ohio, (the only state in which I understand the C.L.P. has a thorough-going organization), and that she knew the C.L.P. membership

would stand by you as presidential candidate to the last man and woman. Mrs. Prevy declared that she knew that Tom Clifford, and Jack Carney in Duluth, (also of the C.L.P.) would stand by you and would so advise their memberships in their respective localities.

Now, since the publication in The Call of my interview with you on the need of unity of all the socialist forces, quite a stir has been made in New York. The first letters that came to the Call in response to the interview were from Algernon Lee and David P. Berenberg.[7] The latter is publicity director of the Rand School. Both of these men in their letters implied that I had not correctly quoted you, and both denied that the leaders were responsible for the split last fall at Chicago. Since then, The Call has been printing a series of letters daily based upon your plea for party unity, and the left wing vieing with the right wing in stating the desire of an irreconciliable position.[8] Perhaps every third letter that comes upholds your view that the issues are not of sufficient import to cause a permanent division of the party ranks.

As to the matter of the socialist party extending an invitation to the C.L.P. to send its delegates to the convention,[9] I have talked this matter over with James Oneal, and he represented himself to me as not opposing unity, but he thought it impossible, and as a member of the national executive committee, he said he would not take the responsibility of initiating a movement to extend an invitation to the C.L.P. to send their fraternal delegates to the convention. I understand that such persons as Julius Gerber, for instance, are opposed even to the thought of a realignment with those elements that now find themselves either in the C.P., the C.L.P. or out of the movement altogether.

Within the ranks of the regular socialist party I can sense no diminution of the enthusiasm and loyalty to you, and wherever your name is mentioned in public meetings it is greeted with cheering that issues from the hearts of those who know their friend and comrade.

I have not heard questioned by any serious minded or responsible comrade your motives for speaking at this time for party unity, but I have heard it said in many places in New York that it was regretable that the issue had again arisen on the eve of the national convention. There is not the slightest question that you will be nominated unanimously at the convention here next month, and in the consumation of that event the will of the rank and file will have been served, however reluctantly it will have been exacted from some of the old line leaders of the party, who, I have been told on responsible authority, had other plans for a presidential ticket. But as you are quite aware, the old line bearers have not often wished you to be the standard bearer of the party.

I am a person of no importance or significance whatsoever in this particular matter, but merely a reporter and interpreter, so I shall not presume to make any suggestions to you along this line. My heart is in the socialist movement, and I know it shall beat always with the toilers of the earth, no matter where chance may cast my lot; feeling this, therefore, I do have an opinion in this matter, and my opinion is based not only upon my interest in the socialist movement, but upon my personal love and loyalty to you. And if that opinion be of the slightest worth to you, I would certainly say that you should accept the nomination for president of the United States on the socialist party ticket. There will [be] some persons in the opposing faction who will be disgruntled, but I feel sure that Mrs. Prevy is right when she says that the rank and file will support you.

As regretable as was the split in the party in 1912, the fact is that your vote was almost doubled over your previous vote in 1908. You are the only man in the United States who can speak for us, Dear Gene, and I urge you to do it.

I hope that you will read into this letter my love for you, my personal and warm interest in your interests, and I hope to be with you in a near day when I shall have the joy of riding back to Terre Haute with you from Atlanta federal prison.

Yours in love until the rivers run dry.
David Karsner.
2 Beekman Place,
New York City.

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. The hotel where Debs usually stayed when he was in Cleveland.

2. Following the party split in 1919, the *Ohio Socialist* became the *Toiler* (first issue, November 26, 1919). Allison, who had been co-editor of the *Ohio Socialist*, became editor of the *Toiler* (which in 1922 became the *Worker*) and state secretary of the Communist Labor party.

3. Walter Bronstrup was secretary of the Communist Labor party in Cleveland. *Ohio Socialist*, October 22, 1919.

4. Tom Clifford (1855-1929) was a Cleveland printer who had been the Socialist party candidate for various Ohio offices before the war and joined the Communist Labor party in 1919. Clifford wrote a regular column, "The Ruminations of a Rebel," for the *Toiler* and, later, the *Worker*.

5. As noted, Joseph Coldwell was in prison at Atlanta at the time.

6. In "Socialists Called to Unite for Victory" (*Call*, April 14, 1920), Debs was quoted by Karsner as saying that "there is no issue that divides the Socialists that cannot also reunite them. There is no real difference in the rank and file of Socialists, the real contentions very likely lie in the different leaderships of the different groups."

7. Letters from Algernon Lee and David Paul Berenberg, both from the Rand School, criticized a part of Debs's unity statement in which he was quoted as saying

that "it would make no difference if every state outlawed the socialist party." *Call*, April 19, 1920.

8. In his letter to the *Call*, Berenberg wrote that "nothing better than last year's housecleaning could have happened to the party. [Unity] is impossible and if possible it would be undesirable." *Call*, April 19, 1920.

9. The Socialist party convention was scheduled for May 12 and 13, 1920, in New York City.

William H. Johnston[1] to EVD

April 29, 1920
Washington, D.C.

My dear Friend Debs:

I have been thinking of writing you for sometime to assure you that we have not forgotten you in any way, nor has our affection for you lessened since we have been privileged to be together. It has been my purpose to personally take your case up with President Wilson at the first opportunity. In fact, I had made arrangements together with a few other men prominent in the Labor Movement to do this upon the President's return from Paris. He started out on his Western trip and came back a very sick man, since which time it has been impossible for him to see anyone.

Last Tuesday night I had the pleasure of having Mr. and Mrs. Charles E. Russell take dinner at my home and we discussed your situation and at my suggestion we decided to get together, a group of four or five of some of our most influential men in the Labor Movement and call upon the President relative to your case.

We feel that at this trying time that the advice and counsel of great humanitarians like yourself are needed and it is indeed a crime to have you situated where you cannot exert that influence for good that you are capable of and which this sort of world is so much in need of.

I just wanted to write to you a brief line to let you know that there is scarcely a day that we do not think of you and we want you to know what we have in mind and what we are proposing to do in connection with your case.

I had a letter the other day from my good friend Guy B. Powers[2] in which he made reference to you. I was glad to know that he had come in contact with you and I am sure your influence will have a lasting effect upon him and that he will be greatly benefited by this contact. We are trying to do something in his behalf.

I would be glad indeed to receive a few lines from you and to learn first hand how you are getting along. I was somewhat worried about your health and I am very anxious to find out just how you feel.

Hoping to hear from you at an early date, I remain with deepest affection

Your Friend,
Wm. H Johnston

[EVD note to Theodore Debs]
Theo:

Please write & thank dear Johnston for this fine letter. He came to see me at Md'sville. Now I wish you to say to him that I appreciate fully his kindly interest but that if he & his friends want to do something for me that will help me more than anything, let them combine all their influence with the President to secure the release of *Guy Powers.* Guy is [a] nurse here in hospital—he is a member of Machinists' Union & Johnston knows him well. Guy is a noble fellow—he has been unfortunate & ought to be pardoned. I have no better friend. Tell this to Johnston & *don't fail.* My heart is wrapped up in it. I am having Guy write Johnston to the same effect & your letter must back him up. Pls. write at once. *Don't fail!* Tell Johnston there are thousands working for me & not to present my case but concentrate on Guy. Tell him I'll be alright anyway & I'll love him forever if he will do his best for Guy.

Tell Johnston that what he does for Guy will be done tenfold for me.

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. William Hugh Johnston (1874-1937) was born in Nova Scotia and brought to the United States (Rhode Island) in 1885. In 1895 he helped organize a local for the International Association of Machinists and during the next fifteen years rose steadily through the ranks of that organization. A socialist, Johnston became president of the IAM in 1911 and retained the position until 1926.

2. Guy B. Powers was an inmate at the Atlanta prison, serving a sentence for murder. Lucy Robins to EVD, October 19, 1920.

EVD to David Karsner

April 30, 1920
Atlanta, Georgia

My dear Comrade David,

Your communication of the 27th inst has been received and I lose no time in replying so that we may both be set right in regard to the

interview you had with me and your report thereof as it appeared in the *Call* of the 15th inst.[1] First of all let me say to you and through you to the readers of the Call and to the comrades and others interested that in all essential particulars your report was correct and as a whole has my unqualified approval, and whatever is wrong with it must be charged {wholly} to me and not to you. I admit that the statement is incomplete and no doubt lacking in other respects, but the fault is not with your report for you caught accurately the spirit and purport of what I had to say and transmitted it faithfully to the readers of the *Call*. Due allowance should be made, however, for the circumstances under which the interview was held and the obvious limitations upon {a} full and free expression of my views.

In the next place it should be understood that I spoke for myself only; I did not presume to speak for anyone else. I expressed as well as I could under the circumstances my opinion of the situation that confronts us on the eve of the present national campaign, and the best course to pursue in the interest of our cause, and this I did simply as a private member, and what I said is entitled to that consideration and no more. It may be added that if I had been looking for a nomination a simpler statement, and one subjecting me to less criticism, could have been made.

That my views have encountered opposition was of course expected. No one, not even the wisest among us, could venture to suggest a way of composing existing differences without provoking adverse criticism. For myself, I attach no great importance to my views and opinions upon party matters. I am as apt to be wrong as anyone. I may be entirely wrong now, as I have been many times in the past. It is my *purpose* only that I hold true and I have no fear of that being questioned.

I have said and I want to repeat that there is no fundamental difference, in my opinion, between the great majority of the rank and file of the three parties; no difference that will not yield to sound appeal in the right spirit. Mistakes have been made on all sides, mistakes aggravated by the war hysteria, and with these candidly admitted an understanding is possible that will embrace a vast majority of all the factions that composed the party prior to the separation. It is not too much to say that I personally know most of the members of all three factions, and I know them to [be] equally loyal and true, and equally eager to serve the cause.

That there are obstacles in the way of unity, and serious ones, it were foolish to deny, but I believe they can be overcome, and if not, then at least there can be a truce on the eve of battle so that we may enter the campaign with a united front and make the most of the

greatest opportunity ever presented to us since the day we were organized.

If I understand it correctly the Socialist party is the only one of the three that has not been outlawed, at least temporarily, and we either have to enter the campaign as the Socialist party or not at all, and this being true, why not go into the fight with all our forces {united} and make the issue so clear and luminous that the enemy will have to face it and thus give us the opportunity for propaganda and action in behalf of our cause that we have never had before and may not have again for years to come? The conditions are ripe; the people are ready; the hour is here. It is up to us! How big are we, or how small! Shall we unite and fight the great political battle before us in behalf of the working class, or shall we turn and rend one another, or seek advantage of each other in factional strife, or talk about our difference or our indifference, and thereby betray the cause by allowing the supreme opportunity to pass us by unimproved? Differences there will always be, especially among socialists, and fortunately so, but wise men profit by their differences and do not permit themselves to be throttled by them.

For myself I have no stomach for factional quarreling, and I refuse, to be consumed in it. If it has to be done others will have to do it. I can fight capitalists but not comrades. It takes all I have in the way of time and strength to face the front and fight the foe. I do not object to fighting among ourselves, if fighting there has to be, but I do insist that we shall be decent and fight clean, and not sink to the level and resort to the methods of ward-heeling politicians.

One remark in my interview seems to have been sadly misconstrued. I did say that it would make no difference to us if the Socialist party was outlawed in all the states, but what I had reference to was our spirit and attitude toward capitalism and the struggle for emancipation. I meant to be understood as saying that we would simply fight with greater energy, enthusiasm and determination than ever before. Some comrades were discouraged by the unseating of our comrades at Albany. Not I. Quite the contrary. That was our greatest political victory. The ruling capitalists now recognize in our movement a menacing force to their corruption and mis-rule, and they have foolishly set about to sit down upon it. Now watch them—and us, if we are not as foolish as they!

Some other comrades were inclined to renounce political action after the Albany experience. Not I. The unseating of those five comrades has shaken the whole country. They are talking about it in Maine and California, and down here in Georgia, and it is all in our favor.

We have lost and won; they have won and lost!

More than ever, if that be possible, do I believe in political action—not in vote-chasing or office-seeking, but in political propaganda and action, and there is a vast difference between them.

The Socialist party is primarily a political party. It is more than that, but it is certainly all of that, or it is nothing at all and should disband. If I did not believe, and believe thoroughly, in political action as one of the essential means of waging the class struggle, I would not be in the Socialist party, not a minute. I can understand those who lay the entire emphasis on industrial action and I can co-operate with them in harmony. I see no necessity for friction or misunderstanding. What I object to is the pretense of political action to screen hostility or indifference to it. If all are either for or against it {in real earnest} we shall {have} no trouble in adjusting ourselves accordingly.

The political appeals, if rightly made and properly supported, can be made most potent and effective in the promotion of our cause and for obvious reasons, I think, this is especially true here in the United States. To secure the maximum of results we should go into politics our whole length and with our full strength; we should have a sound platform and a complete ticket, and we should fight each battle along clean and uncompromising lines.

The coming convention in New York will be the most important yet held. We comrades here in Atlanata join in hearty greetings and good wishes. We have neither advice nor suggestion. We simply trust the delegates may be strong and stand firm; clear-sighted and avoid compromise. In this hour we need as never before faith of granite in our Cause—the supreme cause of mankind. We need the sublime faith the cause inspires in us and in each other, and the enthusiasm that leaps from the soul of a warrior like a divine flame, and all we need to fear is that we may shirk some {share} of our duty and responsibility.

There can be no doubt regarding the temper and attitude of the forward-looking American people toward our movement. All the powers of capitalism are exhausted in vain to misrepresent it. Hundreds of thousands are to-day sympathetic who {but yesterday} were hostile. They know in spite of all the deceit and falsehood made to serve against our cause that we stand for real Democracy and self-government and the essential rights and liberties of the people. And this year, if we but give them the chance, they will rally to our standard, and I am fully persuaded that if we lay aside all differences of the past, as far as may be, buckle on our armor and plunge into the struggle with all our might, heedless of all else, touching shoulders all along the battle-line, when the smoke has cleared away and we

emerge from the conflict we shall be so welded together, so completely one in solidarity and {sympathy and} understanding that there will be little inclination to part company and re-establish a divided and discordant household.

In closing allow me to say that you are at liberty, of course, to publish this letter or to use it wholly or in part in any way you may see fit. For your great kindness in the recent past and for your many loving favors these many years I thank you with all my heart and with love and greeting to you and Rose and your little darlings, and all the comrades, I am

Yours always,
Eugene V. Debs

ALS, NN Kars.

1. "Both Wings of Party Must Work in Unison" (*Call,* April 15, 1920), Karsner's account of his interview with Debs.

Theodore Debs to Lucy Robins

May 1, 1920
Terre Haute, Indiana

Dear Comrade Robbins:—

Your very beautiful and touching communication under date of April 24th. was received by Gene and has just come to me through the office of the prison warden. Gene would certainly write you in person but under prison rules his writing privilege is restricted to his weekly letter home and for obvious reasons he neither asks nor accepts special privileges from the management. Gene wishes me to say for him that he read your fine letter with deep interest and full appreciation. He knows how busy you have been, how faithfully you are working for amnesty and he is deeply sensible, as are we all, of what you have done and are doing in our behalf.

Gene also wishes me to say that he has not seen the Karsner report but that he has always reported him very accurately and that if there is anything wrong with the statement the fault is with him and not Karsner. I can say for Gene that he *does* favor unity of our forces this year and he appeals with all his strength to the Socialists who have been dissipating their power and resources in factional strife to line up and face the enemy with a united front. The opportunity is great and he feels that we must be big enough to take advantage of it. Mistakes have been made on both sides. He believes that he knows

the rank and file of both sides as well as any one in the country and that they are ready to clasp hands and fight the great battle this year with a united force. The factional leaders have but to give the rank and file the chance to unite and they will do it all along the line. Otherwise we shall go into the campaign disunited, disorganized, attacked by our {own} comrades and make a pitiable showing for the movement, which *this year* would be nothing less than a stark tragedy. He repeats that he knows the rank and file of all parties and there is no fundamental difference to keep them in hostile factional camps. The great body of them will come together if their leaders do not keep them apart. They will unite and fight together as comrades if the invitation is extended to them in the right spirit. They will at least unite in this campaign and when that is over they will have been so thoroughly welded together in the heat of battle that they will continue in unity to wage the struggle for emancipation.

Quoting further from his letter to me: "Tell Comrade Robbins I cannot enter into controversy of any kind in my present situation— that I shall have to trust to the loyalty and good judgment of my comrades and I am confident that they will be equal to the situation and take the right course to secure the best results. Tell her the dear New York comrades are doing *too much* for me; they have already overwhelmed me with their kindness. Lucy is a noble comrade. She has left nothing undone for us and we all send her hearty thanks, loving regards and best wishes to her and Comrade Lang[1] and all the New York comrades."

Mr. Zerbst has kindly offered to make a place for Gene on the farm and a little later he may go there but for the present he is preferring to remain in his present situation. His fellow-prisoners in the hospital and elsewhere are kind enough to wish him to stay among them, while the men at the farm are kind enough to send him word that he must join them.

And now, dear comrade, let me add my own little word of appreciation. Gene wrote me of your visit with Comrade Lang, how much it meant to the imprisoned comrades, and how much they were cheered and strengthened by it. I beg you to believe that we are all deeply grateful for your deep interest and your untiring efforts to open the prison gates. With comradely greetings I am,

Yours faithfully,
Theodore Debs

TLS, InTI, Robins Papers.

1. Harry Lang (1889-1970) was a novelist and labor editor for the *Jewish Daily Forward* in New York. He accompanied Lucy Robins on the visit to Debs in Atlanta

in April 1920. *Call,* April 14, 1920. As noted earlier, Lang and Lucy Robins were married in 1932.

Walter M. Cook[1] to EVD

May 13, 1920
New York City

EUGENE V. DEBS,

THE NATIONAL CONVENTION OF SOCIALIST PARTY HAS BY A UNANIMOUS VOTE AND WITH UNPRECEDENTED ENTHUSIASM CHOSEN YOU TO BE OUR STANDARD BEARER IN THE PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN WITH SEYMOUR STEADMAN[2] AS CANDIDATE FOR VICE-PRESIDENT. A COMMITTEE[3] WILL VISIT YOU AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO CARRY IN PERSON OUR MESSAGE OF TRUST AND LOVE TO PERSONIFY THE GLORIOUS IDEAL OF OUR PARTY WE PROMISE A CAMPAIGN THAT WILL ENLIGHTEN AND AWAKEN THE WHOLE NATION.

WALTER M COOK, SEC.

Telegram, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Walter M. Cook (1893-1959) was state secretary of the Socialist party in New York from 1913 to 1920 and served as personal secretary to the five socialist members who were expelled from the New York Assembly in 1919. He later served as an accountant for and advisor to a number of New York City unions. *New York Tribune,* July 24, 1959.

2. As noted, Stedman (1872-1948) was a longtime friend of Debs. The Chicago attorney served as one of Debs's attorneys in Debs's Cleveland trial in 1918 and in the appeal to the Supreme Court.

3. The committee, composed of James Oneal, chairman; Stedman; Julius Gerber; Otto Branstetter; William M. Feigenbaum; and Madge Patton Stephens, formally notified Debs of his nomination in Warden Zerbst's office on May 29, 1920. *Eye-Opener,* June 1, 1920.

Miss H. Plotkin[1] to EVD

May 24, 1920
Brooklyn, New York

My dear Comrade Debs:

I have received your letter and was overjoyed with it because it contained a letter from you.

I heartily congratulate you (future) President Debs. You are the Socialist Presidential Nominee.

I am glad you think that my letter to President Wilson was mailed, but it doesn't seem as if his heart softened at all.

In the first letter I received from your brother he told me to find out more about Socialism by sending for it to the Rand School of N.Y.C. but they did not answer my letter yet I suppose they are too busy.

Did you receive a letter from Comrade Gerson. He is a member of the Jr. Yipsel of Brownsville. He left his home some time ago and has not been heard from since. His mother is very sick and her recovery depends upon his return. He may have written to you because he was a very active member of the Yipsels. If he did send to you, will you please send me the return address he gave you.

I have seen your latest picture from prison in the Sunday's Call[2] and it looks so different than the other pictures I saw. Oh! if Amnesty was only granted to us.

Well as I have no more to write I will wish you some luck.

Yours sincerely
Comrade H. Plotkin.

Address 523 Saratoga Ave., Brooklyn, N.Y., New York

P.S. The name of that comrade is *Meyer Gerson.*

[EVD note to Theodore Debs]

In answering pls. say I recd no letter from the young missing comrade, that I'm very sorry for his mother and hope she will soon see him safely at home again.

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. In a letter from "Miss Comrade Hilda Plotkin" to Debs (April 29, 1920) Plotkin described an incident at the Brooklyn post office in which she believed her effort to send a letter with "about fifty signatures" to President Wilson, seeking Debs's release, was frustrated by a hostile clerk. InTI, Debs Collection.

2. A large photograph of Debs, looking somewhat thin and gaunt, illustrated "The Smile of Gene Debs in Prison," *Call,* May 23, 1920.

Theodore Debs to Lucy Robins

May 28, 1920
Terre Haute, Indiana

Dear Comrade Robbins:—

I did not expect you to take the time out of your busy hours to make reply to my former communication. I know the many demands

upon you and how great the strain upon your strength and energy; and I also know that nature under all circumstances demands a certain amount of recuperative rest—and this, above all else, however deep your feeling in your anxiety to be helpful to our comrades in prison, you must not deprive yourself of. I know and understand the situation, the exactions of your work and if the written word does not come I will still know that you are bending all your energies and giving your all to the liberation of our comrades behind prison bars. And for this, dear comrade, my gratitude is far greater than I am capable of expressing in words. There are times when we struggle hopelessly to give adequate expression to the things we feel; so it is now, as I think of your devotion to your comrades, your unselfish efforts in their behalf and the lofty motive which inspires you.

I can well understand the tinge of disappointment you feel over the apparent indifferences of those you have befriended and who have given no sign of appreciation. We have had this experience times without number and yet, like you, we always felt a keen satisfaction in having rendered a little service to a fellow-man. I am sure that none are ungrateful even if more or less negligent.

I have been following you as best I could through the labor press and other sources of information and I am immensely gratified with the big things you are doing, things that in the aggregate must and {will} wield an influence that will be felt and heard by official Washington, however lethargic their sense of justice, however blunted their political sagacity, or however intense their personal prejudice. Your victory at Pittsburgh at the Convention of Musicians was a brilliant achievement.[1] The rank and file for the most part are alright, but unfortunately for the cause, of which they are a part, and for themselves, they read only capitalistic publications and therefore fail to comprehend the real motive back of these persecutions, and {they} also fail to understand that the precedents established in our cases will some day be used against them.

I thank you for having written me at such length of the things doing and in prospect and with comradely greetings and the best of wishes I am,

Yours in the cause,
Theodore Debs

TLS, InTI, Robins Papers.

1. In *Tomorrow Is Beautiful* (pp. 157-58), Robins recalled her amnesty speech before the AFL Musicians Union convention in Pittsburgh; it caused the delegates to reverse an earlier resolution and pass one calling for the release of political prisoners.

Elsie Brown to EVD

May 30, 1920
Pensacola, Florida

Dear Sir:—

No doubt you will be surprised to get a letter from a little girl twelve years old, But I am just one of the ten million children who love your name and put you the head of all the great men. We *class* you as that of Moses trying to lead the children of Israel out of the land of bondage, And we have joined the great host of this great country in their slogan from the prison to the White House.[1] And our daily prayers are that these words will come to pass. How I wish that you were free that you may enjoy this beautiful sabath-day which God has given us. I want you to answer and tell me to what curch you belong. I hope you are a *Baptist* and if you are elected president of the United States do not try to run this great cuntry, alone but always ask Gods help and do his will. I shall be glad to hear from you if you will have time to write to a little girl like me.

Yours truly,
Elsie Brown

My address is:—Elsie Brown, East Pensacola, Pensacola, Fla. R 1, box 55a

Postscrip—read Revelation: 2, 10[2]

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. The *Appeal to Reason* used the slogan "From Prison Cell to White House" as early as May 24, 1919. Other socialist publications regularly carried it. See Debs, *Walls and Bars*, 101.
2. "Behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison."

Signe Lund[1] to EVD

May 31, 1920
New York City

Dear Eugene Debs.

You do not know the writer of these lines, but it does not matter who *I* am. It is enough that I know who *you* are and that you stand for all what is right, just and good in this world. I am {now} leaving this country, where I have lived and suffered for 19 years, where my

opinions and defense of Kate O'Hare cost me my position and where persecution in every way has been my only reward. But I am *not* a defeated woman today. I go with my head raised high, triumphant, since Decoration day 1920 brought the wonderful tidings of *your* nomination for president and Kate O'Hare's release and complete vindication.[2] What matters it if individuals like myself must suffer when we only feel that in a small degree we have helped to bring about justice and the *dawn of the new day.* I am going, never to return,—but I shall work for our cause wherever I am till the *last.* In Norway—my home country—democracy is much farther advanced than in this land of the *Free,* and I shall be able to speak and write openly and truthfully about everything. I am not a writer by profession, far from it—(I am a musician, composing serious music is what my pen is usually doing)—, but my travels and experiences have taught me to express myself fairly well even in writing, and now I shall try to develop this and will from time to time send some articles on the progress of *our* party here in America to our Norwegian Socialist press. I shall keep in touch with everything over here and will watch with the keenest interest new developments.

When next time your dear old friend, Mr. Odell[3] from Fargo visits you—or you him—ask him, (in case you have not forgotten my name till then) to tell you a little about my work in N. Dakota, and it may explain, partly at least, the liberty I am taking in writing you.—

With all good wishes I remain forever your devoted Comrade

(Mrs) Signe Lund

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Signe Lund (1868-1950) was born in Norway and studied music in various European countries before coming to the United States at the turn of the century. Her activist role in the North Dakota Socialist party and Non-Partisan League; the composition of an antiwar ceremonial overture, *The Road to France,* in 1917; and her circulation of petitions to secure the release of Kate Richards O'Hare were denounced as "unpatriotic and unAmerican" by the American Legion in North Dakota in 1920 and she was dismissed from the faculty at Maryville State Normal School. *The Red Flame . . . the Early Days of North Dakota's Non-Partisan League* (Minot, North Dakota, 1975 reprint), 48, 144, 163.

2. As noted, Kate Richards O'Hare was released from the Missouri state prison at Jefferson City on May 29, 1920.

3. Spurgeon Odell wrote to Debs (February 27, 1920) to tell him that he had sold his "last holding" in North Dakota, had bought "one 40 which has never known the ax of man" in Oregon, and planned to move there with "a few choice friends." InTI, Debs Collection.

EVD to Theodore Debs

June 1920
[Atlanta, Georgia]

Theo:

This is from my dear old friend Ben Hudnut.[1] You remember he used to be President of the bank of which Gus Conzman[2] was cashier. Ben and I were school-mates—we were in the same room & the same class & sat quite near each other. Ben was always my friend—he never changed in his prosperity. Tell him why I can't write. Tell him his letter warmed my heart and refreshed my memory. Tell him I do not feel a day older than I did when last I saw him—that I appreciate his kind remembrance—that I think of him as one of the few remaining school-mates & send him my love & best wishes.

[Eugene V. Debs]

AN, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Benjamin G. Hudnut (1855-1935) was a classmate of Debs and later head of Hudnut Mills and president of the Vigo County National Bank in Terre Haute. *Terre Haute Star,* November 15, 1935.

2. As noted, Gustave Conzman, another of Debs's classmates, was convicted in 1905 of embezzling $60,000 from the Vigo County National Bank.

EVD to Theodore Debs

June 1, 1920
Atlanta, Georgia

My dearest old Pard,

It sometimes seems a thousand years since last I saw you and then again I hold you in my arms and it can not be that we have been apart at all. One thing, however, is beyond seeming and that is that through all the days of separation our hearts have beat as one and no day, no hour has passed that I have not sent you and Gertrude and Marguerite my love and blessing and received yours in return. You have heard, no doubt, of the visit last week of the Notification Committee and of the unique and touching program that was carried out through the courtesy of the Warden. Dr. Stephens will tell you about the proceedings in detail. Isn't she a noble woman and a magnificent comrade! I did not know, though I thought I did, how fine and devoted and courageous and true she really is. She brought me

a lovely message from Kate & carried one back to her and she had so much to say about you & Marguerite and Gertrude. She and Wallace[1] love you all very devotedly and are happy indeed in your confidence and companionship. All the comrades on the Committee treated me with the utmost kindness. They were a fine lot of comrades. "Steddy" and "Jimmy" Oneal and Otto Branstetter and Dr. Stephens and "Billy" Feigenbaum[2] and Julius Gerber made up the party. Joe Coldwell of Rhode Island, a fellow-prisoner and leader of the C.L.P. was present, as were also Sam Castleton and Comrade Rhoden[3] the local organizer. "Jimmy" Oneal made a beautiful little address. They all thought of you and paid you every possible tribute of confidence and love. Pictures were taken for the movies and you will likely see the pictures at T.H. When you write Marguerite Prevey tell her I carried out our agreement to the letter & told the committee all she suggested and *more.* Marguerite was too big & noble and understanding to advise me *not* to take the nomination. There will be all kinds of comment & I will be denounced but I'll stake my life I made no mistake. I followed the inner light that God put there to guide through dark places and it has never yet led me astray and never will. So do not worry, but keep chipper and let your heart sing for we're on the road that leads to Camp Victory. Pls. write to Kate O'Hare & tender our congratulations. I was heartily glad to hear of her release. Tell her we're all happy to see her with her dear ones again. You're no doubt pretty busy. Wish I could help. But I'm doing my little here that may not be entirely without its purpose. Kiss dear Gertrude and Marguerite for me and bless them. They are always in my heart. I've often felt sorry about "Babe"[4]—I know how you all loved that faithful friend. Pls. ask Gertrude to remember me with love to Ed & Ranita when she writes. I shall always love those dear souls and remember their kindness & devotion. I'm in excellent fettle—ready for anything at the tap of the bell. When my glims light on you, old scout,—well, you know what happened to Hammerstein. My arms are about you all!

Eternally!
Eugene V. Debs
#9653

Give my love to Phil and Hollingsworth and Wilson and the Hendersons and Carnes.[5] Tell Kate that I'm feeling better every day and that she must not worry in the least. We are on the right track & the future will make up richly for it all. Tell Dr. Stephens I shall never forget her & give her & Wallace my love.

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Madge Patton Stephens's husband.

2. William M. Feigenbaum (1887-1949) was born in Belgium and brought to the United States in 1891. After earning a B.A. degree at Columbia and an M.A. at the University of Wisconsin, Feigenbaum worked on the staff of the Interstate Commerce Commission and in 1917 was elected, as a socialist, to the New York state legislature from Brooklyn. Feigenbaum later worked on the editorial staffs of the *New York Call*, the *New Leader*, and the *Brooklyn Standard Union*. He was at this time working at the Socialist party's national office in Chicago.

3. Joseph Rhoden was head of the Atlanta local of the Socialist party.

4. Theodore Debs's hunting dog.

5. Phil Reinbold, the Rev. James Hollingsworth, Noble Wilson, Grant Henderson, and Esau Carnes, a carpenter, all Terre Haute friends of Debs.

EVD to Mabel Dunlap Curry

[June 15, 1920?]
[Atlanta, Georgia]

Dearest loved One,

The day is near and my heart yearns for the hour when I shall see you and be with you again. I can hardly restrain the passionate feeling aroused by the happy anticipation. The separation has been a pitilessly trying one and would have been unendurable if you, darling little one, had not been here and shared with me the hunger and loneliness of all these days. Your presence, most dearly beloved, has been magic to my spirit, and its sustaining and inspiring influence has never failed me. You are the most beautiful and wonderful soul in the world. Your loyalty, your courage, and your resourcefulness amaze me more and more. You have a marvellous mind, the readiest wit, and "keen as Ithuriel's spear,"[1] the most delicious humor, and a great wonderful heart full of love that spills over and makes beautiful flowers spring up and burst into blossom all about you. Dear, sweet little girl! You are the apple of my eye. You have brought infinite riches into my life and you have been to me an unceasing inspiration.

Everything that is beautiful, adorable and divine in woman is reflected in your noble character and your radiant personality. How I love you! And how I feel the need of you in all the circling hours of the day and night! My heart is with you and my arms reach for you. The ache of both so oft remind me of your absence. You are in my soul and in my dreams, pure and white as a saint and spotless, and brave and strong and dauntless as a crusader. I love you, dear, with a man's strong and passionate love that surges in the soul and declares itself in every heart-beat. Yes, love is madness! the madness that over-

leaps all barriers, claims its own against the world, and bears the stamp of God's divinity. Love, true love, spurns sanity, defies reason, and transcends all the human senses and limitations for the very reason that it is divine, a law unto itself, and akin with the creative soul of the universe. Yes, my precious one, I love you with all the heart God has given me, and you are mine! You have known that long ago, ages ago, since long before you started on your quest of a million years to find the man your soul was yearning for and sensed in its own subtle way that he was somewhere in the vast universe. You are so very sweet and beautiful, and there is a quiet majesty about you that crowns you with supremacy in every environment. You were born to dominate and you do so naturally and unconsciously, and with a grace and charm that are fascinating and draw all things unto you. Your great, loving heart is with the lowliest; in your kind eyes there are none despised. All are human, and not one can sink below the level of your all-embracing love. You have a face for beauty in all its forms and manifestations, and you are the soul of true refinement! I hold you in all reverence, my beloved; you are as sacred to me as the memory of my Dear Mother. I want and need and must have you. My heart cries out for you and will not be comforted. God bless and love and keep you! My arms are about you and my kisses of love and devotion are on your lips.

Yours!
[Eugene V. Debs]

AL, InU, Lilly Library, Curry Papers.

1. In John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Book IV, Ithuriel is one of the cherubim charged by Gabriel to search for Satan in Paradise. "No falsehood can endure" being touched by Ithuriel's spear.

EVD to Theodore Debs

June 15, 1920
Atlanta, Georgia

My dearest old Pard,

There's but little of what my heart is full of that can go into the written page, but I'm sure you know how near you are to me every moment of our separation, and that you receive the many and frequent messages of love and devotion, too deep for words, that my heart sends to yours across the spaces that lie between us. There is one fine thing about the Summer here and that is that the nights are usually

quite comfortable, so that the heat does not wear me down and out as it does in Indiana. I am feeling remarkably well and all it needs to keep me so is that the dear ones at home shall be well and serene and content, and not fret or worry in the least about a temporary situation fraught with great and splendid possibilities for which, instead of regret or lamentation, we have every reason to thank our blessed stars. We are privileged beyond words to serve the great cause as we have been called upon to do, and if we could not render that trifling service with all our hearts and with smiling faces, we would be weak and paltry indeed and the Almighty Ruler of events would never have chosen us to do his work. But I need not say more for I know you feel just as I do, and although many miles lie between, we have been one and indivisible "on the job" as we have been since our childhood, and no power in all the universe can ever divide us. You and Gertrude and Marguerite—how infinitely blessed you are in having such a noble wife and lovely daughter!—are in my heart of hearts unto its last pulsation—I rejoice greatly in knowing that Kate is so much better and that she looks forward to complete recovery. Her last letters are very cheerful and have relieved me of the anxiety I have felt so constantly since her first illness. She has had a most trying time of it, made all the worse by her teeth, but she is over the severest part of it and I am hoping that from now on she may be free from pain and be herself once more—I regret very much to hear of the illness of John and Rose Stahl[1] and hope they are both on the mend and that better days are in store for them. Dr. Stephens has told you about her visit here and in my last I told you of her kindness to Kate and to me and all of us. She is certainly a noble woman, a loyal comrade, and a devoted friend to our family. Please give her and Wallace my love—also to the Trinkles, Reinbolds, Goldstines, Hollingsworth, Carnes, Noble Wilson and Marguerite Wilson, the Hendersons, Bemises {Quantz} and the rest of the friends and comrades.[2] Things are doing, old pard, and we are losing no time and no ground. I have the strength to stay & you have the patience to wait—and it will not be long. Being true to our noble ideals we have the spirit of youth and the power of truth, and we can turn even jails into temples of freedom. With all my heart, old pard,

Yours now and forever!
Eugene V. Debs
#9653

This is to find you and Gertrude and Marguerite in the very pink of health and hearts singing of the dear days coming when we shall be together again. My dearest love and kisses to you all!

Love to Ed and Ranita when Gertrude writes.

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Debs's neighbors on North Eighth Street in Terre Haute.

2. Not previously identified Terre Haute friends, Dr. Leonard E. Trinkle, a dentist, and his wife, Mary; Samuel J. and Cecilia Goldstine, owners of a delicatessen; and John A. Bemis, a miner, and his wife, Martha.

Grace Keller to EVD

June 16, 1920
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Dearly beloved comrade:—

Faint echoes have reached me of your concern about those of us who are about to perform our part in defense of a cause which should be as dear to every true patriot as it has been to you. I want to beg you in behalf of myself to give yourself no worry and heartache for on the day that I shoulder my banner and walk around the White House demanding the release of yourself and all other war prisoners I shall know the first peace of mind I shall have enjoyed since the war ceased and it became evident that those in authority did not intend to do justice to those who exercised their rights of freedom of conscience guaranteed to them by our constitution, and no pavement on the hottest day of the summer in Washington can be so hot as the fire of indignation that burns in my veins when I think of the outrage of keeping you in that hole two years after the war ceased.

You have done your job: now let us do ours! I shall do my share with philosophy and a sense of humor, which is only a sense of proportion and relative values and if, as you fear, it lands me in prison—well I shall still have my point of view. "Expediency is man's wisdom; doing right is God's." Do not begrudge us the privilege of saving our souls alive dear comrade. Even life can be bought too dearly. I hope, of course, that it will not be necessary for anything drastic to be done, that is I hope you will be released soon, very soon. Every night when I drop to sleep I picture you in my mind packing your bag and saying goodby to your fellow-prisoners and then I paint another picture of you walking under the stars in your own home town conversing with loved ones in freedom. We cannot know what may happen in this

struggle but whatever comes rest assured Gene that it is all alright and that it has been worth what it has cost. "The whole of life is mixed—and if I drink oblivion of a day, so shorten I the stature of my soul."

With my heart's best
Grace Keller.

Did you know that that rival of yours in the manly art of self-adornment is now shorn of his gilded tresses and has promised on his word of honor as a "B.D." that he will never again take an unfair advantage of you. He is taking on a little flesh but he claims that you have had orders to do so and that you are answerable to the high court of the S.A.L. for "contempt" if you disobey so he feels entitled to a few cherubic curves and a coupla dimples.

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

Joseph E. Cohen to Theodore Debs

June 28, 1920
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Dear Theodore:

Here's hoping your eyes are fine again, that you are able to resume your work, and that alls' going swimmingly. I think of you so often, as one vital in every particular, that I cannot bear to feel that you have even a temporary impairment of your vision, just as I cannot reconcile myself to Gene's imprisonment.

As you may have gathered from the party news in the "Call," the movement here has started out more lively than ever before in the campaign.[1] The meetings are reported as twice as big and successful as heretofore, and the presses are grinding out literature to reach everyone. Socialism will make its mark in this country in a way that will gratify us and the Comrades the world over, I feel sure.

Gene's notification, as shown in the movies,[2] was an inspiring and touching sight, and the reception by the audience was gratifying. I saw the pictures in a performance in which Helen Keller participated[3] and I was overcome by the spectacle of this rare soul finding the thread between her lost self and life. She is indeed one of the marvels of our time, and it was most fitting that the pictures of Gene should be shown on such an occasion.

With this note I am getting ready to go to Arden for the next two

months, which means I leave the shop for books and nature and companionship, and how I dearly wish you and Gene could be here!

With all affection,

As ever, yours,
Jos. E. Cohen

When you find it comfortable to write, the address is Arden, Auto Route A Wilmington, Del.

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. The Pennsylvania campaign in 1920 featured a series of open-air meetings around the state at which Kate Richards O'Hare was the main speaker. *Call*, June 15, 21, 23, 25, and 28, 1920.

2. At the time of Debs's notification, "there were many reporters and moving picture camera men present." The movies of Debs and the notification committee were shown in movie houses around the country. "Notified in Prison," *Eye-Opener*, June 1, 1920.

3. Probably the film *Deliverance*, billed as the life story of Helen Keller, who also started a vaudeville tour in February 1920. *New York Times*, February 24, 1920.

William Ellery Leonard to EVD

June 29, 1920
Madison, Wisconsin

Dear friend Eugene Debs—

I envy you your leisure! For myself I'm wondering why in my deluded youth I ever chose the career of a University teacher—if it was for the quiet and unperturbed hours of ease on winter and spring evenings and for the long lazy summer vacations under the apple-trees, I certainly missed out. A modern university is a triple-shift factory with the same man on all three shifts. And as for the summer I've just rounded out the two regular semesters only to begin this morning—I'm writing at six-thirty to the man I've been intending to write to ever since the nomination—on the Summer Session, with six weeks lectures on Shakespeare and Browning. But busy tho I be, I cant say the work is not for the most part some joy. Still a professor, at least a professor who has any convictions on society and politics that are unprofessional, is not altogether to be envied. For one, I'm expecting, as my share of the loot when we've put you in the White House, a tip to this institution to give me a decent salary,—and to end this penalizing of opinion by refusal to promote and by warning to behave myself! (I'm accused of teaching Bolshevism—and, because

one of my pupils began defending Eugene Debs on a visit home her father started a fuss.) The University authorities had a little scare when the state primaries went for La Follette, for they remembered a letter to the Senator (signed by all but about a dozen faculty men) denouncing him as a traitor; but they haven't yet learned the lesson that the University must again open its doors to free thought, even free political thought.

I was talking of you the other evening at our house with—whom? With your former guide and philosopher and your friend ever—Victor Berger. Mrs. Berger[1] and Doris[2] and her young man were with us too. Do you remember Doris?—She graduated this June. I've had her in a class "Philosophy in the English Poets" (which means the *political* philosophy, and a chance to say things!) this year, and have known her very well as a young friend. She's a very winsome, pretty, affectionate, and preternaturally bright girl. But "papa" she thinks is an old fogy conservative! So she called him once when I tried to check her exuberant radicalism by quoting "papa's" rather quieter social philosophy.

In all admiration and affection

Your friend and *fellow citizen*
W E Leonard

A volume of {my} social poems, "The Lynching and Other Poems," is being published this summer by B.W. Huebsch N.Y. It will contain the verses on "The Old Agitator." A copy is to be set aside for the friend of poets.

Don't mistake this jocose, rambling, greeting for frivolity. I cant contemplate your imprisonment—{and} its continuance—without feelings too sad and angry for speech. Hence I make jokes.

WEL

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Meta Schlichting (1867-1944) and Victor Berger were married in 1897 in Milwaukee, where Berger taught German in the public schools and Meta's father was one of the school commissioners. Meta Berger played an active role in socialist affairs in Milwaukee and was for many years a member of the University of Wisconsin Board of Regents, on which her opposition to sororities as a "pernicious influence" made her a center of controversy.

2. Berger's daughter.

Morris Hillquit to EVD

June 30, 1920
Saranac Lake, New York

Dear Gene:—

I have been wanting to write to you a number of times, within the past year, and must confess that I can hardly formulate my reason for not doing so. I felt in a vague sort of a way that you were undoubtedly being beset with letters of information and advice, complaint and explanation, from all directions, and I did not want to add to your burdens. Probably I was wrong, but I want you to know that there was not a period during all of that year that I did not think of you with true affection and absolute devotion.

I am moved to write you this letter by the account of your reply to the official notification of your nomination as published in the Party Bulletin, which I have just received, and particularly by the reported expressions of your opinion on the platform adopted by the convention, and on its stand towards the Internationale.[1] While every concrete statement of yours with reference to the party position—political and industrial—meets my views completely, your general statements that the platform does not have your unqualified approval, and also that you regret that the Party did not affiliate with the Third Internationale without qualification, induce me to offer some explanations. As the chosen standard-bearer of the Party you are entitled to know exactly what kind of a fight you are leading, and besides, I have a personal interest in the matter, as I have been largely responsible for the platform, as well as the resolution on international affiliation, and I should hate to be misunderstood by you, of all men.

Neither the platform nor the Declaration of Principles, nor the resolution on international relations were drawn with a view to making the party more "respectable" or "conservative."[2] On the contrary, it was my intention in framing the document,—an intention which I believe was fully shared by the delegates at the convention,—to uphold the radical position which has characterized the party during the last few years, and to surrender nothing.

The somewhat novel tone of the document was determined by the following considerations:—

With the passing of the war and the beginning of the period of world reconstruction along Socialist lines, the constructive side of the Socialist movement must again be emphasized, particularly upon entering on a National Campaign. We have made our protest against the war, and by that protest we stand. The attitude of protest is

naturally more vigorous in terms and radical in sound than any proposed positive measures, but we cannot of course get anywhere as a party of mere perpetual negative protest.

The positive character of our present platform and Declaration of Principles is one of the features which make them appear somewhat conservative to the superficial critic; to my mind, it is just the opposite.

Another ground of criticism of the documents is the systematic omission of our favorite Marxian terminology in the text; this again I consider a merit rather than a demerit. The recent proceedings in Albany[3] and the extensive newspaper comments in connection with it, have completely and convincingly demonstrated the dense and seemingly impregnable ignorance of the average American in matters of technical Socialistic and sociological nomenclature, and his practical inability to comprehend abstract terms. It is perfectly useless to attempt to explain our conception of such terms as "Social revolution," "class struggle," "proletariat," etc. To the unschooled mind the one will always mean a barricade fight accompanied by terrorism, guillotining, etc.—the other an interminable succession of arbitrary and deliberate strikes and beating up of scabs, and the third, a mass of hoodlums. I am now more convinced than ever that in order to get our message across we must divorce ourselves from the worship of phrases, and talk the plainest possible English.

You are quoted in the Bulletin as saying that in your opinion our platform could have been made more effective if it had stressed the class struggle more prominently, and if more emphasis had been laid on industrial organization. It has possibly escaped your attention that the recent convention has made a radical departure from past practices in the matter of platform drafting. In compliance with a resolution passed by the preceding convention of 1919,[4] we have now divided our statement of program into two distinct parts,—a Declaration of Principles, intended to be a more or less permanent instrument, for use in campaigns and between campaigns, and containing a concise, but tolerably complete statement of the fundamental aims, methods and philosophy of our movement, and a political platform dealing exclusively with the special and temporary issues as they confront us at each successive campaign.[5]

The Declaration of Principles adopted by the convention is in my opinion a {concise} but complete and uncompromising exposition of the class struggle theory, and lays sufficient emphasis on the importance of the industrial organization of labor. The platform deals very largely with contemporaneous political issues. As a complete and independent document it would have fully merited your criticism, but

I repeat, it was intended to be read and circulated in conjunction with the Declaration of Principles.

You are also quoted as saying that you regret that the convention did not see its way clear to affiliate with the Third International without qualification. I, too, regret it deeply and sincerely, but in the present conditions I do not see how we could endorse the Third Internationale unreservedly without stultifying ourselves and surrendering some of the most cardinal things for which our movement has stood, and for which you and others have fought almost a lifetime.

Like you, I am a determined and enthusiastic supporter of the Soviet Government of Russia. I believe our comrades in Russia are doing the most inspiring work ever attempted in the history of our race. I feel an abiding confidence that sooner or later—and probably rather sooner than later—they will evolve a truly Socialistic order of society in Russia, which will in many ways serve as a model to the entire civilized world.

So long as they fight against the international forces of capitalism and reaction, I shall always support them with all the weapons at my command.

This attitude on my part, however, does not imply that I am prepared to take every dictum that comes from Moscow, or from any authorized or unauthorized spokesman of the Socialist Government as gospel truth, or that I shall abdicate my own judgment as to the needs and chances of the Socialist and Labor movement in this country, and take my programs without criticism or analysis from an international pope or from a Holy International Congregation.

The Communists of Russia have done certain things which their own desperate conditions have probably forced upon them. I do not set myself up as a judge {over} them, and do not blame them for such actions. But when, making a virtue out of necessity, they attempt to elevate such actions into a general and universal maxim of Socialist conduct in all countries, I must refuse to accept it.[6]

The Third Internationale, moreover, has been very much less fortunate in the choice of its leaders and spokesmen, than the Soviet Government. Comrade Zinovieff,[7] who as far as I can see, has taken it upon himself to formulate and proclaim the policies of the Third Internationale, has placed the latter in a perfectly impossible position from the point of view of Marxian Socialism. He persists in rejecting co-operation with the Independent Socialists of Germany, the Socialist party {of France} as represented by Longuet,[8] and the Independent Labor Party of England, all of which have stood up very well under the war, and have been unwavering in their support of the Soviet Government. His most recent ban was against the Socialist Party of

the United States in general, and your humble servant in particular, because, forsooth, "the leaders of the Socialist Party supported the European War!" and I {am} a traitor to Socialism on general principles. He insists upon the Soviet form of Government and the dictatorship of the proletariat for all countries, and proclaims it a duty of elected Socialist representatives "to also perform illegal work" and announces that the Anarcho-Syndicalist groups are making overtures to the Third Internationale, and would be welcomed in its fold. The Third Internationale as at present constituted seems to me to prefer the organization of international groups and sects into one body, dictated by Russia, ~~than~~ {to} the formation of an Internationale of all true Socialists of the world. Under these circumstances unconditional adherence would mean not an affiliation, but a surrender.

In taking the stand we have, we have practically followed the same course as the Socialists of France and England and the minority Socialists of Germany. We adhere to the Third Internationale upon the condition that we have a voice in the formulation of the basis of such unity, and that we reserve the principle of self-determination to the extent compatible with the creed and policy of international Socialism. Personally I am strongly inclined to think that such action will bring about a sane, healthy Socialist Internationale, which will be an enlargement and an improvement upon the present Moscow organization.

I have made this letter rather long because I repeat, I do not want you to remain under a misapprehension as to my attitude on these important questions, and whether you can accept my stand on all points or not, it is hardly needful to assure you of my complete and unvarying personal affection and sincere best wishes for you.

Cordially,
Morris Hillquit

[EVD note to Theodore Debs]
Theo:

Please answer this extremely kind, frank and comradely letter from Morris as soon as you can. Tell him first of all that he need never feel that he must write to me, that I am always in touch with him whether I hear from him directly or not, but that I am very glad to have this clear and candid expression from him and that I reciprocate the personally kind spirit of it with all my heart. Tell him that when I made the remarks in question in accepting the nomination I had not seen the Declaration of Principles which I esteem as an admirable document written in the spirit which it seems to me is less militant and appealing in the platform. But tell him that in my present situation

I cannot enter into any controversial matter and that I am sure he will understand me when I say that upon the one great issue we are one and that upon the secondary matters of ways and means if we can not always see alike we *can* always differ with perfect mutual toleration and respect. Tell him the confidence and personal devotion he so touchingly expresses is mutual. Morris knows my heart and must {feel} the love I bear him. I am deeply sensible of all his kindness and affection, his faithfulness and devotion, and no one can admire more than I do his great ability his brilliant intellect and his rare and enviable powers. Tell him that I read each word of his brilliant speeches at the convention and that I was thrilled and inspired by his masterly eloquence. Tell him that his tribute to me was far too generous and that I read it in all humility, through tear-filled eyes. Tell Morris to take care of himself. Tell him for me that I love him with all my heart and that he must get well & strong for us all! Tell Morris I note with especial interest what he says about Third Internationale.

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. In his response to the notification committee, Debs stated his wish that the platform had placed more emphasis on the class struggle and the need for industrial organization and his disappointment that the convention in New York had decided not to affiliate with the Third International without qualification. *Eye-Opener,* June 1, 1920.

2. Critics of the 1920 platform and Declaration of Principles argued that the convention had "completely eradicated from its program and principles the last vestige of revolutionary spirit and came out . . . for a program of compromise, fusion, and 'yellow' socialism." *Toiler,* May 21, 1920.

3. Those dealing with the expulsion of the five socialist members of the state legislature, who were represented by Hillquit.

4. In Chicago.

5. Both the 1920 platform and the Declaration of Principles were printed in the Socialist party *Bulletin* on June 1, 1920.

6. In "Dictatorship and the International," *Socialist World,* August 15, 1920, Hillquit expressed his concerns regarding the Third International's call for the "dictatorhip of the proletariat" and, particularly, his being branded a "traitor," along with other prominent socialists, by the executive committee of the Third International.

7. Grigori Evseevich Zinoviev (1883-1936) was an early supporter and close friend of Lenin who served as chairman of the Petrograd Soviet and member of both the Politburo and the executive committee of the Third International. After Lenin's death, Zinoviev lost power in his struggle with Stalin and, after a series of expulsions from the Communist party was tried for treason and executed in 1936.

8. Jean Longuet (1876-1938), a grandson of Karl Marx, was a socialist member of the French Chamber of Deputies and leader of the antiwar minority socialists in France. He was at this time (1920) being denied a passport to the United States because of his "closeness to the Russian Bolsheviki." *New York Times,* September 13, 1938.

EVD to Theodore Debs

1920 July 5
Atlanta, Georgia

My dearest Theodore,

We are allowed a special "Fourth of July" letter and my heart turns to you and Gertrude and Marguerite with a message of love and good cheer. I hear from you regularly through Kate and otherwise, and always am I happy to hear that you are well and that you keep in good spirits. I am sorry to hear that you are having trouble with your eyes and hope you will lose no time in getting to Dr. Sattler[1] for attention. Eyes are too infinitely precious and important to take any chances with and I have much confidence in Dr. Sattler that I feel sure he will be able to give you relief at once and adjust your glasses so you will have no further trouble with your sight. I have been deeply sensible all these days of the tender and constant devotion of you and Gertrude and Marguerite, and no day passes that my message does not go to you filled with all the love of my heart. You have been all the world to me, and you have had everything to bear and contend with in my absence, but you have never murmured; you have taken everything as it came and you have never allowed a disheartening word to fall from your lips. I am gratefully conscious of every loving thought, every faithful service, every suppressed sigh, every devoted impulse, and every brave endeavor and I shall forget it only when the last breath of life leaves my body. I am well and strong, and my resolute spirit never fails me, and I am trusting you not to worry in the least on my account. Everybody is kind to me. No one ever had such sweet, loyal, wonderful friends and comrades, and I have everything in the world to be grateful for. The men here are as my brothers, and if you could but see how kind and loving these imprisoned souls are to me, you'd be touched to tears. I am very glad Gertrude and Marguerite and you remembered Mrs. Curry on her birthday. She is a noble soul and a most devoted friend, and she has done a thousand times more for us than we shall ever be able to do for her. My love, my devotion, my kisses to you all, now and forever.

Eugene V. Debs
#9653

Give my love to Dr. Stephens and tell her I shall never forget her. Give my love to Wallace too and to Phil and his wife and Dr. Trinkle and his wife and the Goldstines and dear Hollingsworth. When you

write to Otto Branstetter tell him I send them all my love and best wishes.

When you write Emma and Lou send them my love.

I am glad to hear that John is better. Give him and Mary my love.

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Dr. Robert Sattler (1855-1939) practiced ophthalmology in Cincinnati for more than sixty years, taught at the University of Cincinnati during much of that time, and was the author of a number of books on diseases of the eye. *Medical Portraits* (Academy of Medicine of Cincinnati, 1963), 220-22; Cincinnati *Enquirer*, February 21, 1939.

Theodore Debs to Morris Hillquit

July 12, 1920
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear comrade,

Your very fine letter was contained in the budget of mail from Gene this week. He asks me to say to you, first of all, that you never need feel you must write to him as he is always in touch with you—that he is very glad indeed to have the clear and frank statement from you and that he reciprocates the personally kind spirit of it with all his heart!—That when he made the remarks in question, in accepting the nomination, he had not seen the "Declaration of Principles" which he esteems as an admirable document written in the spirit which it seems to him is less militant and appealing in the platform. Of course in his present situation, he cannot enter into any controversial matter, but he wishes me to assure you that upon the one great issue you and he are one and that if in secondary matters of ways and means you cannot always see alike, you can always differ with perfect mutual toleration and respect; that the confidence and personal devotion you so touchingly express is mutual; that he read each word of your brilliant speeches at the convention and was thrilled and inspired by your masterly eloquence; that your tribute to him was far too generous and that he read it with tear-filled eyes and in all humility. He further asks that you *take care* of yourself for he loves you with all of his heart and wishes you to get well for the sake of us all.

I am taking the liberty of sending a little "souvenir" of our present brand of democracy(?) This envelope bears Gene's *Convict number* and the *Censor's Stamp!*[1] as well as a little tribute to you. I regret to say

the last report from a visiting comrade was to the effect Gene was *thin* and had not been able to lie down the night before on account of his heart. My eyes have been giving me trouble but by resting them for a spell, I may get better. Accept the grateful love of us all.

Cordially and fraternally,
Theodore Debs.
Per. M.

P.S. Gene says he notes with especial interest what you have to say about "*Third Internationale.*"

ALS (in hand of Mabel Dunlap Curry, including signature), WHi, Hillquit Papers.

1. EVD's note to Theodore (Hillquit to EVD, June 30, 1920) was written on the envelope in which Hillquit's letter was sent to Debs and bore the stamped notations "Inspected, E.G. Hopkins" and "9653."

EVD to Lucy Robins

July 16, 1920
Atlanta, Georgia

My dear Comrade,

Please say to the comrades in New York that, while I appreciate fully all that has been done in my behalf, I object emphatically to any further appeal being made for me to President Wilson. I wish no special consideration and I wish to fare no better than my comrades. As long as they are held criminals and convicts my place is here. My comrades will therefore understand that they can serve me best by bringing their influence to bear in behalf of all.

Thanking you and through you all the dear comrades and friends who have so loyally remembered us and so faithfully served us, and assuring you that your noble services will always be gratefully remembered.

I remain always

Yours faithfully
Eugene V. Debs[1]

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Robins released this letter, which was widely reprinted in both the socialist and nonsocialist press. "Debs Opposes Further Pleas," *Miami Valley Socialist*, July 30, 1920.

Scott Nearing to EVD

July 26, 1920
Grenoble, France

Dear Comrade:—

In to-day's "Humanite"[1] I see the glad news that you are to be liberated. We all rejoice—for you & for the cause that you have given yourself for.

We are learning a great deal over here—more than we had hoped to. It is mostly of a grim sort and not of the most optimistic tone.

You were good enough to send me a letter to be used as an introduction. It was taken with two other letters of introduction—from my trunk in Paris. Hence I did not use it at all.

The comrades over here are very strong in some places. For instance this city of 100,000 has a Socialist Mayor & 24 of the 36 members of the City Council are Socialists. The other 12 are "radicals."

They asked about you & are glad to hear that you are to be freed.

love & greetings from your friends here

Scott Nearing

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. The leading French socialist paper.

Theodore Debs to Winnie Branstetter[1]

July 28, 1920
Terre Haute, Indiana

Dear Comrade Branstetter:—

Gene wishes me to advise you that a box with an abundance of fruit, tobacco and other good things was received from you and for which he wishes me to return his very warmest thanks. He writes that he understands other politicals were likewise remembered and that the Warden had given orders that all such boxes sent from the National Office be promptly delivered. I need not tell you that your kindness is very much appreciated and the things you send are doubly welcome because of the comradely spirit that comes with them. Gene wishes you to know that the things received are divided around and made to go as far as possible and that the most needy are given first attention.

I quote from his letter as follows: "Please say to Winnie that al-

though years have passed since we used to meet in Kansas and Oklahoma I have always kept them in loving remembrance and that I send my love to her and Otto and the children,[2] now grown, who were quite small when I last saw them. Please add that we are all well and in the best of spirits and that our hearts are with them in all their activities for the good of the cause."

Let me also add my thanks for your kindness to our imprisoned comrades none of whom, I am sure, will ever forget you.

With all kind wishes I am,

Yours fraternally,
Theodore Debs

P.S. If they are off press will you kindly have Comrade Otto send me a few copies of the platform adopted at the last convention. Also ask him to give attention to enclosed letter.

TLS, NcD, Socialist Party Papers.

1. Winnie Shirley married Otto Branstetter in 1899 and became a popular lecturer and writer for the socialist and labor press and a leader in the woman-suffrage movement in Oklahoma. She was at this time working at the party's national office on the Prison Comfort project, which collected funds for gifts to political prisoners.
2. The Branstetters' daughters, Gertrude Lizzita and Theresa Shirley.

EVD to Theodore Debs?

July 31, 1920
[Atlanta, Georgia]

Official Report
Physical Condition of Convict No. 9653

To the Secretary at Large,

The following is an official report as to the physical condition of Convict No. 9653 to date:

Averdupois—Net increase 1 ounce.
Complexion—sun-tanned and swarthy.
Hair—Cut bias: style Pompadour.
Thorax—Ne plus ultra.
Cerebellum—Safe and sane.
Liver and Lights—E pluribus unum
Sweetbreads—well done.
Heart—carroling mellifluously.
Lungs—Leathery and lusty.

Appetite—Prodigious and persistent.
Hands—Feeling their way toward ult. Pudgy.
Feet—Ample and eminent.
Torso—Well barred and secure.

Signed
Uneeda Pill M.D.

Subscribed and sweared to before me this 31st dáy of July 1920
S. N. Hardy
Notary Private

My commission expires when I do.
P.S. This report is definite, specific and authentic.

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

C. W. Stark to EVD

August 2, 1920
Seattle, Washington

Dear Comrade:—
I heartly greet you with an honest and faithful sincerity, for your heroic loyalty to the toilers Cause, for which you have suffered thru your life's time and now. What an holy faith and a glittering example you are setting for us all, God bless you for your noble deeds which echo and resound thru out the World now and Will thousand years from now. Have tasted the fruit of prison life in 1905 when a boy in old Russia for the same cause you are doing now. And my heart breaks to think that here in free America They would torture such a noble spirit as you are, for no other cause but free truth. But Comrade Debs the seeds you so patiently sowed in our hearts, are beg[inn]ing to sprout and you shall live to see the Harvest day, Just like great "Babushka"[1] and others of Russia did in 1917. so may god give you the strength and courage untill our peaceful thriump.

Enclosing a cliping of Seattle daily times, you {may} like to reread you own statement. I don't know how it got here But the move is on

Wishing you strength and peace but first of all freedom.

Yours for better day
C. W. Stark
2611 Eastlake Ave
Seattle, Wash.

[EVD note]
No clipping enclosed

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Katherine Breshkovsky (1844-1934), "the little grandmother (babushka) of the Russian Revolution."

Frank Harris to EVD

August 17, 1920
New York City

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

Dear Eugene Debs:

I haven't heard of or from you for a long time; but you can never doubt my sympathy with your noble stand and unmerited suffering.

I have written articles time and again in Pearson's pleading for amnesty;[1] in fact every number has some prayer; but this administration is impervious to any appeal either of head or heart.

Now I think of using a new power.

I'm going to try to found an organization for Radical propaganda through the "Movies." Some moving motion picture people came to me wanting to buy the right to put my novel "The Bomb"[2] in the pictures; talks showed me the vast power and influence of the new appeal and I conceived the idea of extending the story and including some dramatic incidents from your life.

Do you approve of the idea?

And if you do will you please tell me one or two of the most dramatic or personally characteristic incidents in your life? I suggest the answer to:

"How or Why I Became a Socialist?" You to supply the answer:— Then—

"My Confirmation in the Faith.": or, "My Baptism of Fire," or both. But first a short letter telling me if you approve the new idea as I feel sure you will.

The other day I pled with Senator Harding[3] to speak for pardon for all of you, but without immediate result; however, it'll come you may be sure and soon. I quoted your words on the trial and told him they could be put in "The Sermon on the Mount" and would be about the best of it which startled the old politician. This is private. I went to Marion to plead for you: I called you "The Beloved Disciple."

Keep up your courage. You must remember Wordsworth's finest lines:

"Thou hast left behind
Powers that will work for thee, air, earth and skies;

There's not a breathing of the common wind
That will forget thee; thou hast great allies;
Thy friends are exultations, agonies,
And love, and man's unconquerable mind."

These words are ever in my memory about you, these and another couplet I will quote in my next letter.

But now I hasten for I want my scheme at work and there's much to be done. One word of encouragement from you will hearten all of us.

Ever your loving friend and comrade in all humanities,
Frank Harris

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Harris's articles on "political prisoners" appeared regularly in *Pearson's.* See, e.g., "How Political Prisoners Are Tortured," July 1920.
2. Published in 1908, Harris's novel dealt with the Haymarket Riot of 1886.
3. Warren Gamaliel Harding (1865-1923) was for many years editor of the *Marion* (Ohio) *Star* before his election to the United States Senate in 1914. The successful Republican candidate for the presidency in 1920 agreed to Debs's release from prison on Christmas Day 1921. In "The Presidential Candidates" (*Pearson's,* August 1920), Harris grudgingly concluded that voters should elect Harding, if only "to teach Wilson and Palmer and Burleson what we think of them."

Mother Mary Jones to Theodore Debs

August 18, 1920
Charleston, West Virginia

My dear Theodore:

I received your letter of the 16th. this morning. I must say that I was more than glad to hear from you. I have been thinking of you for several days, and I am going west in a few days and will stop off at Terre Haute[1] and have talk with you about some things.

Poor Gene, he works on my nerves everytime that I turn my thoughts to Atlanta, and I cannot conceive how they could keep a kindly soul like him locked up, he wouldn't harm a little kitten.

I am worried to death sometime about a number of people that are going to jail and how cold blooded they are getting. I will telegraph to you as soon as I arrange to go to Terre Haute, so you can meet me.

With love to Mrs. Debs and your beautiful sweet girl, I remain,
Very sincerely yours,
Mother Jones

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. The Terre Haute papers took no notice of Mother Jones's visit, if it occurred.

Scott Nearing to EVD

August 22, 1920
Paris, France

Dear Comrade,—

You will be interested to know that a number of the French Socialist papers have carried your picture together with a news story, telling all about your stand for liberty. Yesterday the latest story appeared in "L' Humanite" the leading Socialist paper of France. Here they call you "The American Jaures." That is the highest compliment that a French Socialist can pay.

It would have done your heart good this last fortnight to see the workers of Europe demonstrate against war. It was almost unanimous. The people here are tired of war.

I know that your mail is overwhelming, but I wanted to tell you that over here as well as in the U.S.A. your action has had its influence.

Scott Nearing

Greetings from the family.

[EVD note to Theodore Debs]

This letter as you'll see by envelope (over) is from Paris.

A lovely letter from dear Scott Nearing. He's been extremely kind. Do not answer as he will likely be back before your letter would reach him.

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

William Ellery Leonard to EVD

September 9, 1920
Madison, Wisconsin

Dear friend 'Gene Debs—

I've lectured my way through Summer School on Shakespeare's Tragedies and Browning's Dramatic Lyrics; I've written a 50,000 word M.S. on a curious psychological experience for specialists in psychic and neural disorders; I've corrected the proofs on a volume of verse ("The Lynching Bee and Other Poems" which includes "The Old Agitator," by the way, B.W. Huebsch, publisher); I've harvested my corn and beans and carrots (from the adjoining lot); I've taken my last swim for the season in the now fast chilling waters of these autumnal lakes; I've read a Greek Play, and I've cast my vote in the primaries for the La Follette Candidates for Governor and Senator[1]— and am impatiently waiting to cast a vote in November for Eugene Victor Debs. But I've left one thing too long undone: I have not yet written the letter I've been for months intending to write to the man who has been so often in my thoughts. This rainy morning invites me to my intentions; but I wish you were here to see the trees through the moving veil of slanting drops and the lake beyond in the dim gray mists.

Two bits of local news about your friends. Doris Berger was highly pleased with your letter on her marriage. Ilsa[2] has had a misfortune. She took it into her head to go swimming with some other wicked young girls during the Summer Session, down off the pier by the University Boat House at midnight—which is vastly contrary to the {official} regulations governing the conduct of young ladies in attendance on this dignified Seat of Learning. The night watchman spotted and reported—and the Dean of Women did the rest. Had neither the long distance telephone conversation between Mrs. Berger and me and the austere Spinster Dean, nor Mrs Berger's visit here, protesting simply,—and quite correctly—that the punishment was too severe and most unwise, could prevail against the sentence finally OKed by the discipline committee: suspension and loss of all credits for work during the Summer Session. Years ago there were happier days for the damsels. Once my wife, in her Sophomore year, came near joining a week-end houseparty, where the Chaperone didn't turn up at the last minute and the party amused itself without her—and the girls, when their dereliction was discovered, were given merely a good talking to and a good scare. But times are changed—and Bolshevism must be crushed and young ladies must learn to be good. The

other item is that Upton Sinclair writes me his boy David is to come to Wisconsin this fall. I hope he walks the straight and narrow path of academic industry and sobriety; for let some rah-rah boy of the leisure class get drunk around the fraternity house and its all right, but let a young radical or the son of a radical kick over the traces and it's a proof of the viciousness of his or her father's social theories.

I was talking the other day with Professor Paxson,[3] expert in the history of American political parties, on the pending federal elections. We were in considerable agreement: there never had been a time when there was so little of an issue between the main parties; most would vote not with reference to the future so much as to the immediate past, some to crack the administration of W.W., some to crack Lodge[4] and other Senators, some others to crack the whole system. Debs, he said, would get a big protest vote—"but it would have no significance"; and at this point we of course disagreed. The one thing of momentous significance to me in the coming election—where Harding will probably get the victory—is the size of the eventual protest vote. I wish it were not to be split up so[5]—it would be more eloquent if it *all* went to you.

Meantime you are still behind the gray walls. It seems like a bad dream still. And perhaps it is better not to talk about it. But you do know I envy you, most selfishly, your power to put this business through—to stand and to outstand this imprisonment. Nine years ago, after the insanity and suicide of my first wife, I suffered a devastating nervous breakdown that has left me with {a} chronic disorder of attacks of abnormal fear—when I lost my nerves I seem partially to have lost my nerve too. I couldn't live through what you have—even for my convictions. Hence my envy. But you will pardon me that.

As always affectionately your friend
W. E. Leonard

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. The "La Follette Candidates" were James Thompson, who lost the primary race for United States senator, and John J. Blaine, who won both the primary and general elections for governor of Wisconsin. *New York Times*, September 10, 1920. Blaine was re-elected in 1922 and 1924 and was elected to the United States Senate in 1926.

2. Victor and Meta Berger's daughter.

3. Frederic Logan Paxson (1877-1948) was professor of history at the University of Wisconsin from 1910 to 1932.

4. Henry Cabot Lodge (1850-1924) was a congressman from Massachusetts from 1887 to 1893 and United States senator from that state from 1893 until his death. His leadership of the Senate in the fight against the Treaty of Versailles and League of Nations Covenant had made him a national figure in 1919-20.

5. Leonard apparently referred to the presidential candidacies of the Farmer-Labor, Prohibition, Socialist Labor, and other parties in the 1920 election.

Harold W. Ross[1] to EVD

September 10, 1920
New York City

EUGENE V. DEBS

WILL YOU FURNISH FOR US WITH YOUR SIGNATURE IN AMERICAN LEGION WEEKLY STATEMENT OF TWELVE TO FIFTEEN HUNDRED WORDS WHICH WILL DISCUSS BROADLY SORT OF ADMINISTRATION YOU WOULD GIVE IF ELECTED AND ANY PUBLIC PROBLEMS YOU CARE TO PRESENT WE PREFER THAT EXSOLDIER ANGLE BE OMITTED AND WISH TO ANNOUNCE WITH STATEMENT THE FACT THAT WE MAKE THIS REQUEST WE ALREADY HAVE STATEMENTS FROM SENATOR HARDING AND GOVERNOR COX[2] AND ARE SENDING SIMILAR REQUESTS TO MESSRS CHRISTIANSEN[3] AND WATKINS[4] THIS MAGAZINE IS NONCOMMERCIAL PUBLICATION OWNED BY AMERICAN LEGION AND READ BY NEARLY ONE MILLION EXSOLDIERS ALL POTENTIAL VOTERS PLEASE ADVISE[5] OUR EXPENSE

HAROLD W ROSS
EDITOR
THE AMERICAN LEGION WEEKLY

Telegram, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Harold Wallace Ross (1892-1951) edited the army newspaper *Stars and Stripes* during World War I and the *American Legion Weekly* for a few years after the war. In 1925 he launched and for a quarter-century edited the *New Yorker* magazine.

2. James Middleton Cox (1870-1957) was the editor and publisher of the *Dayton* (Ohio) *Daily News* and other Ohio newspapers and was a Democratic congressman (1909-13) and governor of Ohio (1913-15 and 1917-21) before receiving the Democratic presidential nomination in 1920. He was defeated in Warren Harding's landslide victory.

3. Parley Parker Christensen (1869-1954), a Salt Lake City attorney, was the Farmer-Labor party candidate for president in the 1920 election, in which he got 264,540 votes.

4. Aaron Sherman Watkins (1863-1941) was an attorney and Methodist minister who was the Prohibition party candidate for vice-president in 1908 and 1912 and for president in 1920.

5. During the 1920 campaign, Debs was permitted only one weekly statement for the press, but it seems extremely unlikely that he would have contributed to a publication of the American Legion, whose role in the Red Scare he deplored and whose leaders and members were among the most vocal opponents of his release from prison.

Lucy Robins to Theodore Debs

September 21, 1920
New York City

Dear Comrade Theodore Debs:—

I am just preparing to leave town to address more and more conventions for general amnesty. Yours and Gene's letters always act upon me as a balm to a deep wound. So, in spite of lack of time I am stealing a few moments to give you all possible information.

As you know, our Committee conferred with Palmer, and I hope that you were able to read between the lines of the daily newspapers. Had you seen the delegation you too, with us, would have felt proud. There were 25 delegates in our Committee, which included Gompers, Morrison, two Vice Presidents, all Building Trades Departments, many International Presidents, a committee of this office, Max Pine,[1] Secretary of the United Hebrew Trades, Meyer London,[2] Socialist Congressman. The spokesmen were Samuel Gompers, and Meyer London. I believe that both you and Gene would have been very happy to listen to the wonderful talks made by both men, and surely these talks contained nothing to make any prisoner ashamed. I believe that it is the first time in the history of the Labor Movement that an official Labor Committee worked hand in hand with an outspoken Socialist and allowed him to speak in the name of the American Federation of Labor.

Here, I want to tell you that Palmer did not refuse the Labor Committee to help release the Political Prisoners. On the contrary he had promised that he will take it up with the President, but since we were determined only upon a general amnesty for all Political Prisoners, and through proclamation by the President. He explained that it would be a very difficult matter as the Wardens under whose jurisdiction all kinds of prisoners are held, cannot through the Presidents proclamation release Political Prisoners until the Department of Justice looked over the cases and sent to each Warden the list of Prisoners to be released. The second difficulty is that many of the Political Prisoners were convicted through more than one law. That is the Espionage Law, Trading with the Enemy Law, and the Conspiracy Law. Therefore, it would be necessary for the Department of Justice, in spite of the President's proclamation to look through each case and release the Political Prisoners from all of these Laws.

He also declared that for the past year, which is since we had started our campaign, he had already released without appeals or trials hundreds of Political Prisoners, and he intends to release the rest as

quickly as time will permit him. Now whether we agree with Palmer or not his explanation does not mean that he is opposed to a general amnesty. On the contrary he declared that he agrees with us and that the Political Prisoners should be released.

But here is what happened. Instead of the newspapers printing the Palmer answer to the Labor Committee, the newspapers purposely, to hurt our cause, printed Palmer's Answer to the Socialist Committee[3] which followed us about six hours later. We knew in advance that the Socialist Committee was going to give the Cap Press exactly the food that they were looking for, and that is exactly what happened. The Socialist Executive Officer seems to take special delight in creating these confusions and help poison the mind of the average masses of people against the release of the Political Prisoners.

I will show you another example of what they did to me personally. Just as we were going up to Palmer's office and everybody was teasing me and telling me that it was my wedding day, because I was so happy in getting such a representative committee together, for such a radical cause, a letter was handed to me as a token of appreciation and inspiration from the Executive Secretary of the Socialist Party.[4] Needless to tell you that it almost broke my heart. I am enclosing a copy herewith. I am also enclosing copies of letters which they sent broad cast to rob me of my name and reputation. I swallowed as much as I could for the sake of the cause that we all have at heart and not wanting to harm any radical group whether they deserved it or not.

When I got back from Washington, instead of leaving at once as planned, to the following conventions, the Brewery Workers, the Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners, a membersip of 300,000 the Brick and Clay Workers Convention, the Michigan State Federation of Labor, I had to drop these conventions because I did not have the will power, the desire or the energy to go out on the road, to bear influence and to bring fruit.

I called together our radical executive board members and declared that under the infamous insults of the Socialist Party upon me, I could not go on with the work any longer, and therefore, must quit for it is beyond my strength. Of course that meant to close up our office and to stop all activities for general amnesty for Political Prisoners.

The United Hebrew Trades wanted me to take a committee and go to see Gene. Dear Comrade, I did not have the heart to burden poor Gene with these worries and these troubles, and so for the moment I declined, but I was so sick at heart that I wanted to run away from everybody. But of course you understand that through the responsibility I assumed, the United Hebrew Trades finally succeeded

in actually whipping me into the work again. I consented for the time being, but I do not know how successful I will be.

By the enclosed copies you can see what a terrible time even the United Hebrew Trades is having with our own papers and various groups.

I would very much like that if possible you should see some of the moving picture houses in your town, for this week they are showing in the weekly news the Labor Committee that appeared at Palmer's office with the demand for general amnesty. They call it "The Labor and Socialist Committee," although the Socialist committee was not there, still the impression is a good one. We think that it is the best propaganda matter that was ever known for our cause and it will be shown all over the country.

Our next step if I am able to continue will be to see President Wilson, but I feel that our Internal fights has taken all the life out of me.

You will pardon me Dear Comrade for burdening you with so much reading matter, but I have to let it out somehow and I want you to know the true situation.

I hope that your eyes are better. Do not lose heart or courage for the Sun is always bound to shine after a heavy storm.

With Comradely good wishes, I am

Yours,
Lucy Robins

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Max Pine (1866-1928) was born in Russia, emigrated to New York in 1890, and worked as a printer and officer of the United Hebrew Trades Union, which he served as secretary from 1916 to 1926. Pine was financial secretary of the AFL's amnesty committee.

2. As noted, Meyer London was elected to Congress in 1914, 1916, and 1920 and was narrowly defeated in the 1918 race.

3. An account of the Socialist party amnesty committee's meeting with Palmer is in *Socialist World*, September 15, 1920. The committee, composed of James Oneal, Bertha H. Mailly, and George E. Roewer, Jr., met with Palmer on September 14, 1920, and demanded "the immediate release of all political prisoners, not as a measure of clemency, but as a matter of justice and decency." The minutes of an earlier meeting on May 15, 1920, between Palmer and a Socialist party delegation headed by Seymour Stedman are in the National Archives, Records of the Department of Justice, Political Prisoners World War I, Record Group 60, File 197009-1.

4. Otto Branstetter. The letter has not been found.

Madge Patton Stephens to EVD

September 26, 1920
Terre Haute, Indiana

Our Dear Comrade—

This is just to tell you the "boys" enjoyed your "second"[1] through the United Press Service. The "Post" should use this news but hasn't to date. Called the present Editor, Ruth Abeling,[2] and asked her about it. Said she did not know of your series. Bosh!

We are having Quantz to finish 10,000 leaflets of same this week. We will get more later. We will plaster this old "Hut" and vicinity—every door knob—with *This,* the platform and a flyer, Mrs. Curry and I are conjuring up—, that is, if the "flyer" sounds all right. Forgot to say our product is for women.

Two, four page leaflets have been written by Mrs. Blatch[3] but they are too lengthy for this stage of the game. We must have something that says to the women, "Do you know this, *this* and *this.*" "Why they should vote *Thus.*" Oh if we could have something spicy as your last for women,[4] we would be in the swim.

Really, Comrade, speakers are as scarce as hen's teeth. We will have Winnie Branstetter here Oct. 12th. Then she is off for Atlanta.

A route through Indiana has been scheduled for me but the continued and serious illness of Wallace's mother will prevent my going. And such a disappointment too.

But the joy of the fight is not to be stolen so completely. We will get very busy in the district. Maybe our energy is need[ed] worse here in our own vicinity than out through the state.

A county meeting was called yesterday and all the "boys" there were willing to line up for service.

Observation: President Wilson has given $500. for Democracy for which the boys fought to save man kind. A fine dowry out of the gift of a hundred million Congress gave him.

Hide my face! 500 dollars for campaign fund! The wash woman gave me a $1.00 one day last week (a mother of seven children) and said, "Use this in the campaign of Comrade Debs. He doesn't know me, but I know him." That $1.00 was more than $5000 of Wilson's dont you think? The tears bobbed up in spite of myself—when she said and did this. It was accepted because it made her happy.

This infamous League[5] is the dirty blanket to cover thousands of starving children and the poor blinded voter cant see it.

Two charming New York girls—their father a charter member of first local in New York—were guests of ours last week. They had hoped to meet you in your own home. The first evening we called on Mrs. Debs.

If you can write a message to Theodore about Mr. Demming—the old puritan type who is there, I will deliver to Mrs. Demming.

With Love and all Good Wishes from Wallace and me—

M. P. Stephens.

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. The second of Debs's weekly campaign statements, in which he expressed his opinion that President Wilson would be "viewed with contempt" in history. *Appeal to Reason*, September 11, 1920.

2. The Terre Haute city directory for 1920 listed Ruth Abeling as associate editor of the *Post*, R. H. Gore as editor.

3. Harriot Eaton Stanton Blatch (1856-1940) was a socialist leader of the Women's Trade Union League and the National American Woman Suffrage Association and, later, of the Congressional Union and National Woman's party. Her "Socialist Success in Suffrage Victory" appeared in *New Day*, the national Socialist party journal, on September 11, 1920. In a letter to President Wilson, February 20, 1921, Blatch urged him "to change that word 'denied' written on Secretary Palmer's recommendation to pardon Mr. Debs, to the word 'granted.' " Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.

4. In "To the Women of America" (*New Day*, September 18, 1920), Debs reminded female voters that the Democratic and Republican parties had denied them the right to vote for seventy-five years and that the Socialist party had stood for full equality from its beginning.

5. Debs viewed the League of Nations as "an international conspiracy of capitalists" to maintain their control over workers. See "Harding and Cox Pull Stunts," *Appeal to Reason*, October 2, 1920.

Seymour Stedman to EVD

September 29, 1920
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Brother Debs:

They sent me into Oklahoma for a twelve-day speaking engagement where the temperature rose above a hundred. Thus they prepared me for hell. Then they sent me to the western coast where they have climate,—here they prepared me for heaven. I feel that I am now thoroughly qualified for either place.

All along the route I met countless hundreds who were asking "when will Brother Debs be out," some with tears in their eyes and

showing a great deal of emotion. Some would say, "I am glad to shake hands with you, but I would rather shake hands with Debs," and then attempt to qualify it tenderly by saying, "I mean I wish he was out so that I could shake hands with him." I should certainly hesitate before taking the responsibility that you have by reason of the unexampled devotion and affection of the multitudes.

The Party was in bad shape, the movement in very good condition. The meetings and the response was very much above our expectations. The attacks upon the Party by the press and the American Legion and other thousand per cent patriots was vicious but it was astounding to see the rebounding of the movement after the repressive measures due to the war. There is some haziness in the west and there are still a great many who are attempting to change conditions by a boomerang method of tactics, that is, they look at the United States through first looking over at Russian and European propaganda and conditions and hesitate to adopt the tactics which constitute the most direct attack upon capitalism in the United States. The ousting of the New York Socialists again,[1] and the attempt to prevent our political activity should open the eyes of those persons who regard political action as inconsequential to the fact that our growing political strength with its definite and uncompromising purpose arouses our antagonists to a fever heat of opposition.

I note by the papers that you receive a large number of letters and other documents. I have for that reason refrained from writing to you and make this communication very short, therefore.

I am doing the best I can, but fully realize that my abilities are far from reaching the requirements of the situation as a result of your absence from active participation.

The administration is very much perplexed. They don't want to hang on to you, and they don't want to let go. The fall in prices and the closing of industries, unemployment problem, financial bank and industrial depression, which is in its incipiency, may throw us into a fearful industrial mallestrom.

I hope our party may, during the next two years, assemble with a concrete program at every opportunity for an attack upon the capitalist system. The opportunities of the next two to four years will surpass anything we have ever had in the past. If we can use the capacity we have and develop the organization we should have, we will rock this old system off its hinges within the next four to eight years.

I hope you are enjoying the best of health and believe me that

many thousands turn their thoughts to you as they feel the inspiration of your devotion.

The last time I met Teddy I left him badly mutilated. I know he was obliged to write you with poltices on his eyes and a twisted beak. That was my work. His vanity will prevent him from confessing the results of a humiliating defeat. You remember Terry McGovern?[2] Well, that's the way I acted toward that brother of yours. I would have sent him to the hospital but I knew he had a lot of letters of yours to answer, so for him you were a life saver.

Sincerely, and with love,

As always,
Seymour

[EVD note to Theodore Debs]

Pls. say to "Steddy" that his letter was especially gratifying & cheering to me, that it reminded me of the old days and that the spirit of youth throbbed once more as I perused its lines and recalled the scenes & experiences of twenty years ago. Tell him I have heard of his wonderful meetings and that his speeches have been reported to me in the highest terms and that I am applauding his splendid efforts and rejoicing with him all along the route, regretting only that I can not be with him to share in the demands of the campaign. Tell him I am perfectly agreed with him as to the outlook for the future and that we have every reason to put forth our best efforts in behalf of the party and the cause.

Pls. tell him I remember Terry McGovern (he took me to the only prize fight I ever saw—in Chicago—Terry McGovern beat Geo. Dixon,[3] but I nearly fainted) and that when he & I and Teddy meet there will undoubtedly be a busy & interesting time and the shedding of copious installments of fur and entrails. Pls. say that I send love and best greetings to him and Irene and Comrade Soelke.[4]

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. The five New York socialists expelled from the state legislature in April 1920 were overwhelmingly reelected by their districts on September 16 and again expelled on September 20, 1920.

2. John Terrence ("Terrible Terry") McGovern (1880-1918) was a bantam- and feather-weight prizefighter.

3. George ("Little Chocolate") Dixon (1870-1909) and McGovern fought in Chicago on January 9, 1900.

4. Stedman's wife, Irene, and law partner in Chicago, Charles H. Soelke.

Josephine S. Tilton[1] to EVD

October 3, 1920
Epsom, New Hampshire

Comrade,—

Last week I sent you by mail N.P. Roger's[2] Writings. The markings in book were made years ago, or rather most of them.

As you received "Science of Society,"[3] and "Heywood's Essays,"[4] I think there will be no objections to this of Rogers.

This week I mail to you "Acts of the Anti-Slavery Apostles" by Parker Pillsbury.[5] You will readily see the force of Wendell Phillips' remarks to you about the bitter persecution.[6]

I am near my end so am sending books to those who I think will appreciate them to read and to have.

I hope to live and vote for Debs. Wish I could live to know you were free from prison.

I have been arrested many times but only in jail three days—in Watkins, N.H.

Very truly,
Josephine S. Tilton

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Josephine S. Tilton (d. 1921) was the sister-in-law of Ezra Hervey Haywood and an active member of the Boston Anarchist Club and other New England radical organizations. A collection of her letters, describing her activities in various reform groups and her "school" at "Epsom on the Hill" in New Hampshire, is in the Wellesley Historical Society Library at Wellesley Hills, Massachusetts.

2. Nathaniel Peabody Rogers (1794-1846) graduated from Dartmouth in 1816 and practiced law in Concord, New Hampshire, until 1838, when he founded the *Herald of Freedom,* an early antislavery newspaper. His *Newspaper Writings* were published in 1847 and his *Miscellaneous Writings* in 1849.

3. Possibly *The Science of Society* (1884), a collection of lectures on sociology given at the University of Virginia by George Frederick Holmes (1820-97).

4. Possibly the essays of Ezra Hervey Heywood (1829-93), radical Massachusetts abolitionist, women's-rights, and labor advocate and free-speech champion, whose writings resulted in three indictments and two prison terms for "obscenity."

5. Parker Pillsbury (1809-98) was a leader in the New England abolitionist movement and, after the Civil War, in the movements to secure black and woman suffrage. His *Acts of the Anti-Slavery Apostles,* a history of the abolition movement in New England, was published in 1883.

6. In "Wendell Phillips: Orator and Abolitionist" (*Pearson's,* May 1917) Debs described "the savage hatred and bitter persecution" of Phillips and Phillips's visit to Terre Haute in 1878.

William Henson[1] to EVD

October 4, 1920
[Atlanta, Georgia]

Mr. Debs, Dear Sir—

I am writing you againg, I can all ways find something to say to you, Mr. Debs. I think you with my whole heart for what you gave me I realy did enjoy it *all*. Sorry that I can't do something for you, But if God spar me I will be of some help to you some day. For I am loing to be with you on the outside, For I am very much interested in your great work indeed, I read your trial in Cleveland, Ohio and Every word you said is very truly, And that is why the government is keeping you in here, For you are a *Man*, a man with a real heart. And that what they don't like.

They get a poor man or a poor woman down just as long as they can, They are making Millions and millions of dollars from poor people, I will be truthfull with [you] I would indeed like to see *you* in the White House and thousands of others would too. The people are just waking up some of them, and it would Please lot of people to see *you* President, Mr. Debs, I read the pace of Mr. John D. Rockefeller, I did not know what his income was before.

In your great work you win out, I hoping so any way, and you are going to be successfully Too.

Hoping you will get out very soon, But I will Miss you very, very much, But I sincerely wont to see you out, if I don't never get out I want to [see] my Dear Friend in a new world. Mr. Debs, Please any time [you] want me to do anything, just ask me and I will be very glad to [do] anything for you, and I do it with all my Heart, and I Do not want you to give me anything at all, For I am not looking for any thing, For I cant do what I would like to do.

You are my only Friend I have got, And all I want is a chance to show the world that I want to do the Right thing I want to [do] it and I will do it,

Hopeing you are feeling O.K. tonight,

Yours very truly
William Henson,

[EVD note to Theodore Debs]

Read this and weep with compassion over this sweet-souled colored child that never had the ghost of a chance.

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Henson was one of Debs's fellow prisoners at Atlanta. In this and in a number of other letters written in 1920 and 1921, he expressed his gratitude to Debs for Debs's friendship and counsel. InTI, Debs Collection.

William Tappan[1] to EVD

October 5, 1920
Annapolis, Maryland

My dear Mr. Debs,

Would you be kind enough to write, for the information of many who are interested, what is your attitude toward *the* League of Nations and *a* League of Nations? If you would take a few minutes to state this *in your own handwriting,* it would be greatly appreciated by a large group.

Yours very truly,
Wm. Tappan
1228 Munsey Bldg.
Baltimore Md.

[EVD note to Theodore Debs]

Pls. say that I very much appreciate his [illegible words] and regret that my situation prevents [illegible words] making such a statement as I would wish. Briefly, in the present order of society the "Nation" is the ruling class and not the people, and I am opposed to *a* league or *the* league or *any* league of these ruling class "nations" to further buttress their cruel & oppressive misrule and exploit the world. But I am heartily in favor of a federation of peoples, that shall embrace the whole earth.

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. William Tappan (1863-1948) received bachelor of arts and doctor of philosophy degrees at Kenyon College in Ohio before moving to Maryland, where he taught Latin and Greek classics at a number of Maryland preparatory schools and colleges. He was at this time headmaster of the Jefferson School in Baltimore. *Baltimore Sun,* February 27, 1948.

Morris Hillquit to EVD

October 9, 1920
Atlantic City, New Jersey

Dear Gene,

Some of the members of our N.E.C. and Bill Feigenbaum have been good enough to convey to me your generous greeting, for which I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

I am following very attentively your articles for the United Press and your interview by Norman Hapgood,[1] now running in the American, and I have also read your interview in the Sunday World. It is all fine and effective work, Gene. Actively and passively you are doing more for the cause in jail than a thousand ordinary propagandist could do at large. But how I wish you were free and with us!

So much has happened since your imprisonment, and so much is happening still every day in the international movement and in this country; so many new problems have arisen and so many new situations press for action, that we cannot afford to miss your daily counsel and the inspiration of your personality.

As to myself I am back at work—to some extent at least. While I am feeling perfectly well my doctor insists upon caution for fear of a relapse. That is why I am spending a week-end in Atlantic City in the midst of the campaign.

Please accept my loving greetings, and take as good care of yourself as you can. You will need all your strength of body and mind for the great work that is waiting for you when you come back to us.

Affectionately yours
Morris Hillquit

[EVD note to Theodore Debs]

Pls. write Morris (if you have not his N.Y. office address send care of Call) and say that his beautiful letter is with me and that each word touches me and that I thank him with all my heart for his appreciative comment and his approving expressions. Tell him I am also keeping up with his excellent work and that I marvel at his ability to do so much in the service of the cause in his impaired state of health. Tell him the N.E.C. members furnished me with a copy of his splendid pamphlet on "Present Day Socialism" and that it is up to his high standard of clear and logical thinking and literary excellence, and that I fully appreciate his invaluable contributions to the campaign and the cause, as well as his personal kindness and devotion to me. Tell him above all else that I want him first of all to take the best of

care of his health and to conserve himself in every possible way for the sake of the movement and the numberless comrades who love him until he is completely restored. Tell him we shall meet again and meantime he has my love and every good wish of my heart.

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Norman Hapgood (1868-1937) was a Harvard graduate (1893) who turned from law to journalism and worked on various Chicago and New York papers before becoming editor of *Collier's Weekly* in 1903. As editor of *Collier's* and later of *Harper's Weekly* and *Leslie's Weekly*, Hapgood established a reputation as a moderate muckraking reformer and strong supporter of Woodrow Wilson, who appointed Hapgood minister to Denmark in 1919. His interview with Debs at Atlanta was widely reprinted in the socialist and nonsocialist press (*Appeal to Reason*, October 23, 1920; *Washington Times*, October 7-10, 1920) and was extremely sympathetic toward Debs. "Injustice, oppression, persecution, savagery do not embitter him," Hapgood wrote. "I do not think he ever hated a single human being or ever advised a single act of revenge."

EVD to Theodore Debs

October 10, [1920]
[Atlanta, Georgia]

Theo.

Pls. drop a few lines to Otto B. & say to him that I have recd the Press Service Bulletin of Oct. 9th and that I have read it with keen interest and that I appreciate it all, especially the splendid, stirring appeal "To the Men and Women of America."[1] (It was I who suggested this and it has been well done). Pls. say that it made my blood tingle and that I feel confident it will awaken the slumberers and stir them to action everywhere. It is a {resounding} battle cry to the people, and unless they are dead to every sense of manhood and womanhood and every sentiment of liberty, they will respond with eagerness and enter the lists of the social revolutionists who are battling so bravely for human emancipation.

Please say that the very kind and generous and whole-hearted words spoken in personal allusion touch me most deeply, and {that my} only regret is that I cannot serve more worthily in these critical days when each of us should gladly lay all he has upon the altar of our beloved cause.

[attached]

Pls. answer this and direct to
Secretary Local Union 2670
United Mine Workers
Eccles, W. Va.

Tell them we return our warmest thanks for their brave & inspiring message & that coming from them and from there it is worth more to us than a ton of gold. Tell them I am watching the struggle of the Miners in W. Va. with keen interest—I know much about the W. Va. situation. I was there 25 yrs. ago organizing the miners & was hounded & threatened and came near losing my life there in Aug. 1897. The last time I was there in the interest of the miners was in the Paint Creek & Cabin Creek Strike.[2] Tell them to stand by their colors & we will do the same here—Love & best wishes to them all!

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. *New Day,* October 9, 1920.
2. In 1913.

Boyd Sloan[1] to EVD

October 11, 1920
Gainesville, Georgia

Personal

Dear Mr. Debs:—

Your interviews given Norman Hapgood, and published in "The Sunday American" and "Atlanta Georgian" have called attention to the darkest blot in the history of our country, our holding political prisoners.

I trust and believe that these interviews will bring to the people full realization of what our Government has done in imprisoning you, and others, for having and expressing political views not in accord with those of the present administration.

I am not of your political faith, and, can not bring myself to your point of view, yet I firmly believe that we should erase this blot that stains our reputation for freedom, and should immediately release you and the others who have been imprisoned for like reasons. I would like to aid in attaining this.

What, in your opinion, would be the most effective step toward obtaining their release?

Trusting that you will favor me with a reply, I am,

Sincerely Yours,
Boyd Sloan,
Gainesville, Georgia.

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. William Boyd Sloan (1895-1970) was admitted to the Georgia bar in 1915 and during the next thirty years held a number of local and state offices in Georgia, including a four-year term on the Georgia Superior Court (1945-49) and a four-year term in the state legislature (1927-31). In 1951 he was appointed as a federal judge and in 1965 senior district judge in the Northern District of Georgia, in which roles he participated in a number of landmark cases involving civil rights in Georgia.

Frank Harris to EVD

October 12, 1920
New York City

Dear Comrade:—

I am sending you a copy of the November issue of Pearson's. You will see how we are promoting the cause in which you are concerned, and how I have picked you and Stedman as the only worthy candidates for office.[1]

I wish that you would send me an expression of your opinions for the next number of the magazine. I will publish it with a reproduction of a note Shaw[2] has written me. He says: "It serves Larkin[3] right to {go} to America where "liberty is treated as anarchy." I see Stedman tomorrow too and will get some word from him. I mean to put your likeness & that of Stedman on my cover.

Ave atque Vale Affectionately & Fraternally yours
Frank Harris.

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. In "My Political Creed" (*Pearson's*, November 1920), Harris wrote: "I like and admire Eugene Debs and Seymour Stedman. . . . They are both head and shoulders above Harding and Cox as well in depth of thought as in high unselfishness of purpose. Accordingly, I must vote for the Socialists."

2. George Bernard Shaw (1856-1956) was one of the founders of the Fabian Society in England in 1884, and in a long and distinguished career as a dramatist, which earned him the Nobel Prize in literature in 1925, he was one of socialism's most famous spokesmen.

3. As noted, James Larkin was sentenced in 1920 to a ten-year prison term for

criminal syndicalism and served three years of it before he was released by New York Governor Al Smith.

EVD to Frank Harris

October 14, 1920
Atlanta, Georgia

My dear Frank Harris,

I shall not see your Magazine, to my deep regret, as it may not enter here. You have fought and are now fighting a heroic battle against overwhelming odds, and but for your genius and personality Pearson's could not have lived. You have in fullest measure my admiration, my love and best wishes.

Yours always
Eugene V. Debs

ALS, Leo Miller Collection, New York City.

Frank Sheridan[1] to EVD

October 14, 1920
New York City

My dear Mr. Debs:—

On page 57 column 1 of Oct 16th issue Saturday Evening Post, you will find a letter I wrote to Samuel Blythe[2] quoted.

I do not belong to your party, or {to} any party, but the Socialistic party gets my vote this year—unscratched—also, my wife's vote, as a protest against those in Washington and Albany who—toil not but spend like hell.

I am a high salaried actor—the owner of The John Franklin Music Co N.Y. and one-third owner of the H.A. La Motte Co. (Cutlery) Newark N.J.

By precedent, I should fight you; by decency, I am fighting for you and what you represent.

Sincerely Yours
Frank Sheridan

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Frank Sheridan (1869-1943) was a well-known Broadway actor and after 1929 appeared in dozens of Hollywood films. *New York Times,* November 28, 1943.

2. Samuel George Blythe (1868-1947) was on the staff of the *Saturday Evening Post* from 1907 until his death and was the author of a score of books, most of them dealing with American journalism and politics. In a column, titled "How Radical Are We?" Blythe quoted Sheridan's letter, in which the actor stated his "belief that the Socialists could not do as badly as the two old parties have" and his intention "to vote the straight Socialist ticket this fall." *Saturday Evening Post,* October 16, 1920.

EVD to Mabel Dunlap Curry

[October 19, 1920?]
[Atlanta, Georgia]

My most Beloved,

There is so little of what I feel with such intensity this morning that the written page can carry to you. Almost a month has passed since I expected to see you. I did not think I could endure it longer. It seemed as if the extreme limit had been reached. What inscrutable fate is charged with inflicting such anguish?

Some times the maddening thought forces itself upon me that I shall not see you again. But the reaction follows swiftly and must, or I would lose my sanity. I do not know what these days are bringing to pass. Now and then there are flashes of vision, but so much I see through a glass darkly. I can do little here but screw up courage to the sticking point, and I have done that. Nothing can daunt or discourage me. So far as the great struggle is concerned, "I am the master of my fate."

But I want you. My heart cries for you, aches for you, and will not be still. I know how you have suffered, precious love of mine, as if I had carried your agonizing heart in my body. How cruelly and wantonly the fates have taunted your tenderness and mocked your devotion! But may it not possibly be, after all, to some higher end not now clear to our vision? It must be so. A great love may have to suffer the agonies of travail but it can not finally be abandoned by the God of Love that brought it into being. You are infinitely beautiful to me this morning. You appear in the light of a halo as if in transfiguration. More than a year has passed since I have seen you, but my soul visualizes and idealizes you, dear love, and you are ever with me and ever more radiant and beautiful. You are my own precious love and my heart longs for you, aches for you day and night. You

are sweeter and dearer to me than ever before. My arms are about you and I love and bless you with all my heart.

Your own
Ura

ALS, InU, Lilly Library, Curry Papers.

Lucy Robins to EVD

October 19, 1920
New York City

Dear Comrade Debs:—

I haven't a minute to spare but will attempt just to say hello. I wired you from Washington about Guy Powers case. According to the records that I have seen his case looks very bad. For instance the woman was shot three times. That proves that it could not be an accident. She died in the hospitial saying that he did it, and many other things of similar character. The best encouragement Johnston received so far was that perhaps something could be done in 1922. However, as soon as Johnston gets back to Washington he will again confer with Mr. Palmer to see if it can be taken to some court of appeal for pardon.

As to general amnesty, I again received some encouraging information, but you understand, Dear Friend, that we can never feel sure until we actually see our Political Prisoners on the street as free men. All we can do at present is to work and to hope.

I do not know whether you had an opportunity to see the statement that was given out in your name, but since I have only one clipping on hand, I am making a copy of it to send to you merely for your information. It seems to me a crime that these statements are made in your name, for I am sure that you can readily understand that when you, as a candidate for President and under our propaganda work for amnesty, you became very favorably popular in the Unions. I do not think I need to go into details to tell you that both the leaders of the Unions as well as the rank and file read the statement "beware of your leaders." You at once get their antagonism and bitterness against you, instead of bearing influence upon them. I am quite certain that you with your ideas and your understanding of the psychology of the masses, I am sure that outside of prison you would use the same method that you use in prison, and that is in the most appealing way, in the most human way, appeal to the intelligence and

to the very best that is with in the hearts of the masses, and if you do that only through the method of teaching and friendly criticism, I am sure that the seed of your thoughts always take root. But when people go out with broadcast and sweeping statements to an organization of 4200 Local Unions with over 4,000,000 membership and tell them, "Beware of your leaders"[1] you cannot get their friendship nor their tolerance, because while they will criticize their leaders, they will never tolerate antagonism upon their leaders from an outsider as long as the leaders represent them.

We must admit that the leaders in the American Labor Movement are the leaders of the masses. We cannot say that they control the masses absolutely, for you ought to know that when a mass of people are ready for a more progressive step there isn't a leader living that can hold them back.

One of the reasons why the Socialists have always failed to reach the heart of the masses is because they antagonize the man that represents them. The educator or agitator may be right or wrong, the resentment is just as bitter, and that is why I am sure that this statement as many other statements was never made by you. Our enemies as soon as they have seen this statement in the press made sure to forward same to Gompers, and others. Gompers gets inquiries from every direction asking why he should come out so openly in conferences and communications for the release of Debs, when Debs continually hammers and slams him in every direction, and at every opportunity he has. But Gompers answer was, "Debs and I have been friends in our youth, for years we have differed in opinions, and we differ in opinions today, but since I am convinced that he is entitled to his freedom upon the fundamental principles of the right to speak one's mind, I will continue until he is freed," and immediately Gompers had written a letter to President Wilson, similar to the one I have shown you, because he too, does not believe that these statements come directly from you. Do not take it to heart, Dear Friend, we just ignore it and go on with our work just the same for the general amnesty for the Political Prisoners.

I am enclosing two of the little pictures I have taken while with you in Atlanta.[2] In spite of the prison surroundings, and the knowledge that you have to be between the stone walls, I cannot help but carry pleasant memories of every privileged visit with you. Each moment spent with you brought new light, new encouragement, and a new inspiration to work, and work, and work for the principles that we hold dear.

Hoping that it will not be very long before I can have another long

chat with you, but which I hope will be at the dinner table according to your invitation, "you the host and I the guest," I remain

With the best of all good wishes,
Lucy Robins

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. In "Flays Labor Leaders as Cheats" (*Washington Times*, October 11, 1920), which was distributed by the Socialist party as Debs's fifth campaign statement, workers were warned against leaders who advised them to vote for the Democratic or Republican party candidates.

2. Several of Lucy Robins's photographs of Debs's cell in Atlanta and of Debs surrounded by cows at the prison farm are in InTI, Debs Collection.

Upton Sinclair to Theodore Debs

October 19, 1920
Pasadena, California

Dear Comrade:

I have a letter from the warden saying that Debs may autograph the special edition of 500 books.[1] I presume there is no doubt that he will want to do it. Will you be so good as to write to Mr. Castleman[2] and find out if he will receive these books from the warden when they have been autographed, and will arrange to have them mailed out either from his office or by some other comrades in Atlanta. We will of course pay the postage and wrapping charges.

Sincerely,
U Sinclair

TLS, NNU Tam, Debs Collection.

1. Five hundred copies of *Debs and the Poets*, autographed by Debs in Atlanta, were offered for sale by the *Appeal to Reason* (November 6, 1920) after the 1920 campaign.

2. Samuel Castleton secured permission from Attorney General Palmer for Debs to autograph the copies of *Debs and the Poets*. Palmer to Castleton, December 18, 1920. National Archives, Records of the Department of Justice, Record Group 60, File Number 77175.

Theodore Debs to EVD

October 20, 1920
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dearest Pard:—

The day that Winnie Branstetter was in Terre Haute I received a newspaper clipping, an editorial from the Christian Science Monitor, quite lengthy, from Upton Sinclair, which said among other things, that you had declared your determination to "obstruct the draft." Sinclair wishes me to ascertain whether this statement is correct. I do not remember of you ever having made such a statement. I gave the clipping to Winnie Branstetter to read to you and to ascertain whether there was any truth in the statement as published. I have heard from neither you nor Comrade Branstetter. Please let me know as I wish to answer the inquiry from Sinclair and I can not do this until I know the facts. My own opinion is that the statement [is a] damned lie, but I want to know first hand.

The mail is quite heavy but we are getting on O.K. Sinclair is to undertake, as you probably know, the publication of Ruth Le Prade['s] book.[1] For obvious reasons I am glad that this is to come out,—and at once. It should have been published 60 days sooner and it would have been of immense help in the campaign. Your last weekly letter is a corker.[2] The local here is putting it out as a leaflet, for distribution here in the city. James Lord, of the miners, is here tonight to chloroform these poor, suffering, half-starved, devils in the interest of his masters. Christ, will labor never awaken and kick out its Judases!

Love, old pard,
Theodore

[EVD note to Mabel Dunlap Curry?]

I noticed the false statement in the C.S. editorial at the time but I did not intend to pay any attention to it.

Pls. say to Theo. that Winnie Branstetter handed me the clipping from the Christian Science Monitor among other things but she said nothing about any attention to it—she no doubt overlooked it. Tell him that as he surmised the statement in the C.S. Monitor {editorial} that I had declared my determination to obstruct the draft is an absolute falsehood. I never mentioned the draft in my speech, nor made any references to it—tell him, please, that I know about the Ruth Le Prade book and am glad it will soon be out—and please say that I send my best love to him and Gertrude and Marguerite.

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. *Debs and the Poets.*

2. Debs's sixth weekly message, "Debs Spikes Harding and Cox" (*Call*, October 16, 1920), denounced the major-party candidates for ignoring the unemployment issue while focusing their attention on "the League of Liars or the League of Looters."

EVD to Otto Branstetter

October 23, 1920
Atlanta, Georgia

NATIONAL OFFICE, SOCIALIST PARTY,
Otto Branstetter, Executive Secretary
220 South Ashland Boulevard, Chicago, Ill.

Atlanta, Ga., Saturday,
October 23, 1920.

My dear Otto:

Today the blessed boxes came to the political prisoners here (25 I think) from the Prison Comfort Club,[1] and you should have seen the smiles of joy and gratitude on the faces of the convict recipients. There were roast-beef, ham, pork and egg sandwiches, smoking tobacco, cigars, matches, pecan nut candy, chocolate bars, Malaga grapes, bananas, apples, chewing gum, etc., and best of all, the "dear love of comrades" that came with the boxes to give the contents a delicious spiritual flavor fit for the gods.

We are feasting today, dear comrade, with the proud and happy feeling that we are in the hearts of our beloved friends and comrades on the outside, and if the prison had any terror for us, which it has not, it would not only have been robbed of such terror, but converted into a holy temple by the precious love and devotion of the Prison Comfort Club, made manifest in the generous offerings that were laid upon the altar of liberty today as our sacramental feast. Of course, we are sharing our blessed bounty with our fellow prisoners who have no dear and devoted comrades to remember them in their loneliness and deprivation, and they too now feel the incoming of Socialism even behind the gray walls, and join with us in a shower of blessings upon the loyal and loving members of the Prison Comfort Club.

Each box had in it a card bearing the name of the recipient with the following greeting: "Presented by National Prison Comfort Club. Prepared by Atlanta Prison Comfort Club."

We can almost see the dear comrades preparing the boxes with tender devotion, and we can almost feel the touch of their faithful

hands in the delicacies their kindness and generosity have provided for our enjoyment and good cheer.

Please express our affectionate appreciation and our warmest thanks to each member of the Prison Comfort Club, and say to them that their kindness and comfort will never be forgotten.

Yours in the Cause,
(Signed) Eugene V. Debs

TLc, NcD, Socialist Party Papers.

1. The Prison Comfort Club was made up largely of socialist women, organized by Winnie Branstetter, who worked for amnesty, sent "comforts such as food, clothing, books," and helped the dependents of prisoners, "irrespective of their political or industrial affiliation." *New Day*, December 18, 1920.

Leonard D. Abbott to EVD

October 26, 1920
New York City

Dear Eugene,

It is long since I have been in direct touch with you, but I think of you often and have read, with deepest interest, recent interviews with you in the "American," "World," "Call," & other papers. I took luncheon with David Karsner today.

I cast my first vote for you, in 1900, & I shall vote for you again next Tuesday.

With love and loyalty,
Leonard D. Abbott

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

Theodore Debs to Upton Sinclair

October 26, 1920
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Upton Sinclair:—

Yours of October 7th., with its numerous enclosures, was received and I have delayed making reply until I could hear from Gene relative to the editorial in the Christian Science Monitor. Communication with the prison is slow. Gene writes but one letter each week and therefore

when we are in a hurry our correspondence is very unsatisfactory. I sent the clipping to Gene through Winnie Branstetter, as it is contrary to the rules to admit clippings in letters, and asked her to have Gene write me at once. But in the excitement or misunderstanding of my instructions she failed to do this and this too, added to the delay.

When I read the editorial in the C.S. Monitor I knew the statement contained therein to the effect that Gene had declared his determination to obstruct the draft was a damned lie but I knew you wanted it direct from him. Here it is: "Tell him (Comrade Sinclair) that the statement in the Christian Science Monitor editorial that I had declared my determination to obstruct the draft is an absolute falsehood. I never mentioned the draft in my speech, nor made any reference to it."

This, however, is not the first time that the C.S. Monitor lied outrageously about Gene. About the time that Gene was arrested, I think, it had a lying editorial of some length. Immediately upon its publication Chas. L. Drake,[1] a Christian Scientist of many years, knowing the editorial to be a mess of lies wrote an article setting forth the facts. The article was couched in the most dignified language. It was refused by the editor. Drake then appealed to the Board of Managers (I think that is the name) having the publication in hand, but that too, side-stepped with a lot of soft words giving the reason why the Monitor could not retract a lie uttered by its editor. I think I have the correspondence somewhere if I did not return it to Drake.[2]

I am delighted that you are to publish the Ruth LePrade book, more on Ruth's account than any other. This little comrade, frail in body, has given her strength and energy for months, to say nothing of the expenses incurred, to gather the material for this book and I greatly feared that in the present circumstances, the unsettled condition of the printing and publishing business she would not find anyone to back it. I cannot tell you how glad I am that you have come to the rescue by putting it in print! Glad on her account and glad on our own. It comes, I believe, at an opportune time, especially the 500 copies that are to be autographed in prison, which can be advertised as "Christmas presents."

Circulars for "The Brass Check"[3] and the 2000 circulars of "Debs and the Poets" received and both will be used in our correspondence.

Yours of the 19th. received this moment. I shall write to Castleton at once relative to the shipment of the books direct from Atlanta.

With all good greetings I am

Yours in the cause,
Theodore Debs

TLS, InU, Lilly Library, Sinclair MSS.

1. Charles L. Drake was a Chicago socialist whose lectures on the socialist lecture circuit featured his personally made movies, which, according to the *Rip-Saw* (September 1916) "revealed the hideousness of American commercialism" and "the wretched conditions of the working classes." Drake had accompanied Debs on the Red Special in 1908, and in August 1921, with Irvin St. John Tucker, he launched the *Debs Freedom Monthly*, which became *Debs Magazine* in February 1922. Drake served as managing editor of both magazines.

2. Drake to Theodore Debs, April 29, 1919. InTI, Debs Collection.

3. Sinclair's *Brass Check: A Study of American Journalism* was published by Haldeman-Julius Publications in Girard, Kansas, in 1919.

Theodore Debs to Lucy Robins

October 27, 1920
Terre Haute, Indiana

Dear Comrade Robins:—

Your kind favor of the 19th. with its enclosures was received by Gene and all are read with appreciation. In answer, he says, please say to Comrade Robins that I have every reason to feel deeply grateful to her for she has worked for us hard and faithfully under all kinds of difficulties and discouragements and she has faced them all bravely and has done wonderful work in the way of creating sentiment in our favor and I would not for the world hurt her feelings or embarrass her in her work. Also, please say to her that this time the statement in question is mine, but that of course I had reference only to crooked and corrupt leaders and not to any that are straight and honest. I cited the leaders of the miners and named them, everyone of whom left a crooked trail in the union that led to a fat job for himself, and I want everyone of these crooks pilloried without mercy. No honest leader was attacked and has no cause to object to what was said.

Furthermore, he wishes to say, that he wants his liberty bad enough, God knows, but that he would rather stay in prison to his last day than to keep silent when he sees the hard-working rank and file betrayed and delivered like sheep at the shambles by crooked leaders to get juicy jobs from the greasy politicians for themselves. There was nothing personal in what he said about Gompers but simply an attack upon his political policy which he believes to be utterly inimical to the workers for while he says he {(Gompers)} is non-political, he comes out every time for the utterly rotten Democratic party with its Tammany Hall affiliations.[1]

It is the rank and file and not the leaders that Gene is interested in. The leaders have a way of looking out for themselves. He never

knew one of them to fail in that particular. And it is the leaders (!) that howl about his attacks that are hit—otherwise they would not howl.

But most important of all: Gene wishes me to thank you with all his heart for what you did for Guy Powers. Tell her, he says, she did that for me and that Guy has been fearfully punished by his long imprisonment and that his nerves are giving way and that I ask her to do all she can to secure favorable action and that I will forever bless her for it.

Gene thanks you too, for the little pictures which pleased him very much as they reminded him of the beautiful day your visit made for him. The Pampas plant you brought is on his window sill in full bloom and flourishing. He waters and tends it and it pays him richly for all.

We all join, dear comrade, in love and thanks and best wishes and I am,

Yours faithfully,
Theodore Debs

TLS, InTI, Robins Papers.

1. In "Debs Flays Labor Leaders as Cheats" (*Washington Times,* October 11, 1920), John Mitchell and William B. Wilson were cited as examples of labor leaders who received well-paying jobs after leaving the UMW; Gompers was included among those who "lead workers into capitalist parties" and were "the chief betrayers of labor."

Katherine Metzel Debs to David Karsner

October 29, 1920
Terre Haute, Indiana

Dear Comrade:

Your last World article[1] is received. Thanks! I have been so grieved over the untimely death of dear John Reed.[2] I remember with so much pleasure a fourth of July two years ago when he and Art Young spent the day with us. It was a wonderful day with wonderful people and I never shall forget it. His death is a calamity and a loss to humanity. I think of his wife.[3] Your article was fine, superb grand

Love to you and yours.
K. M. D.

ALS, NN, Kars.

1. "John Reed," *New York World,* October 23, 1920.
2. John Reed died in Moscow on October 19, 1920.

3. Reed married Louise Bryant (1887-1936), a writer who accompanied him to Russia, in November 1916.

George Sylvester Viereck to EVD

October 30, 1920
New York City

Dear Mr. Debs:

Permit me to thank you for your two beautiful messages,[1] which I shall always count amongst my most precious possessions. I shall frame one of them and I shall place the other among my treasures.

I certainly hope to meet you, in the flesh, before long. It seems to me that they cannot incarcerate you after the election, when so many millions of your countrymen will register a protest in your behalf. Mr. Harding has acknowledged receipt of my letter, but he has not answered it. I am using it as the basis of an editorial which will appear in the November number.[2]

You say I should be a Socialist. Perhaps you know that my father was at one time a Socialist member of the Reichstag and was imprisoned repeatedly with Liebknecht and Bebel.[3] However, Germany makes a distinction between political prisoners and others. His treatment could in no way be compared to the atrocious and barbarous penalty inflicted upon you in defiance of the constitution and of the traditions which alone make America a country worth living and dying for.

I am not a Socialist. I am afraid my social conscience is not sufficiently developed. I am more stirred by individual wrong than by the wrongs of a class. However, I look upon the individual as a symbol of something greater than himself. You are a great man as Eugene V. Debs, but you are even greater as an emblem of that which is unconquerable in the soul of man. However, I am afraid I shall never be a Socialist.

In politics as well as in life and philosophy, and in letters, I shall always be an eclectic. I shall never adopt any faith, economical or religious without reservation. Was it not Oscar Wilde who said he belonged to the Brotherhood of St. Thomas? I can no more accept the gospel of Socialism than the gospel of Moses, Mohammed or Christ.

Einstein has shown the relativity of all things. We know now that even axioms of geometry are not true, that even numbers lie and that the stars are prevaricators. The old philosopher, who said, panta rei—everything flows—has expressed my view of the universe. I look

upon myself and upon human beings as isolated atoms, monads as one philosopher called them, whirling through the universe for no imaginable reason, towards no imaginable end. Only now and then one of these solitary atoms vibrates for a little space in unison with some other atom. Friendship, comradship, love are such moments. They are at best brief, but they create the illusion, at least, that the solitude of the soul is broken for the time being. Is it ever really broken—who knows?

It is a feeling such as this which makes my heart go out to you and it is no doubt the same feeling which prompts you to say that we are in some ways akin. I can think of no greater compliment coming to me from you. Yet even this may be an illusion. Everything flows, everything changes, or, in Goethe's words:

> Nichts ist ewig als der Wechsel,
> Nichts bestaendig als der Tod

However, to pass from the purely spiritual to the material, is there anything that I can do for you? Is there some book that you would like to read or some delicacy that I can procure for you which is not included in your present fare? If so, please send me the message and I shall do my best to meet your wishes.

Human beings are so clumsy that they are unable to show affection and admiration except by obscure symbols, awkward caresses or inadequate material manifestations. There are a thousand ways of causing pain to one for giving pleasure.

Believe me, my dear Mr. Debs,

Faithfully yours,
George Sylvester Viereck

[EVD note to Theodore Debs]

I will leave you to answer this fine and very interesting letter from our friend Viereck when the spirit moves. I cannot share in his views of life and of human relations, but I can and do appreciate very fully his noble spirit, his tender sensibilities, and his deep sense of justice. Please give him my warmest thanks with my loving regards and good wishes. Tell him I need nothing more than his precious friendship and I know I have that, and it is a source of inexpressible pleasure and comfort to me.[4]

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. In letters to Viereck on October 21 and 23, 1920, Debs thanked Viereck for having been "exceedingly kind to us political prisoners and to myself in particular" and told him "you ought to be a Socialist." InTI, Debs Collection.

2. In "Senator Harding and Convict No. 9653" (*American Monthly,* November

1920), Vierick attacked Harding's statement that "he would not make a distinction between political offenders and common criminals" and stated his hope that "he does not include in his indictment idealists of the type of Eugene V. Debs."

3. August Bebel (1840-1913) and Karl Liebknecht (1871-1919), leaders of the German socialist movement.

4. In his letter to Vierick (October 23, 1920), Debs wrote that "we have never met but I feel that we are close of kin." InTI, Debs Collection.

Arthur Witting[1] to EVD

October 30, 1920
Ann Arbor, Michigan

Dear Mr. Debs,

On the eve of the election I want to send you my greetings and wish you good cheer.

Like many thousands, I am sure, have already done I wish to express my convictions that never have you more truly held the respect and admiration of the working class of this country than you do at the present time—not merely because of your imprisonment, but primarily because of the truths you spoke at a crucial time that inevitably made you a prisoner.

And it is for those utterances and for your never-flinching courage to stand by the consequences that revolutionists the world over honor you. You are to-day entrenched in our hearts as never before. And that is saying much.

Unfortunately, however, the same cannot be said of the Socialist Party of America. (I am here particularly speaking of the Executive Committee and of those who shape the official policy of the party and who largely determine its platform.) Through its many tyrannical actions relative to minority groups; and especially through its repudiation of the Third International it has alienated the confidence and forfeited the allegiance of many thousands whose course is unswervingly set toward international co-operation of proletariat and who hear in the councils of the Third International the voice of the world's workers.

The Party platform is woefully out of touch with the spirit of world events and with the newly awakened hopes of the class conscious workers in this country.

In the hour of the Proletarian revolution in Russia and of the Third International, based on that revolution, the platform's outworn phraseology of the past utterly fails to comprehend the present day status of the working class.

In writing you my opinions thus candidly I am heartened by the fact that you were the first to criticise the reactionary tendency of those responsible for the platform, and to speak over their heads to the new consciousness of the workers.[2]

And it is because of these things that I cannot this year vote the Socialist ticket. I have come to this decision after no little deliberation. I wanted to vote for you, and I *would* like to do so. But you, I know, would be the first and quickest to discountenance such action. It is not personality for which we vote. But it is to our convictions and to our principles that we must give our vote as well as our voice.

I have discussed this point with a number of Socialists, some of whom hold the same view.

However, I need hardly add: neither is there any other ticket in the field for which I can conscientiously vote.

I have felt impelled to write this as an expression of confidence in you and as a protest against the {official} policy of the Socialist party.

Wishing you abundant health and strength

I am yours for the world's toilers
Arthur Witting

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Arthur E. Witting is listed variously in the Ann Arbor city directories of the period as a laborer, accountant, clerk, and student.

2. As noted, Debs was at first critical of the 1920 convention decision not to affiliate with the Third International, but he changed his position and in the *Socialist World* (October 1920) he is quoted as asking, "How can we commit the party unreservedly to something that doesn't exist? . . . If you were to commit the party in America to the International program laid down by Lenin, you would kill the party. Moscow wants us to change our name to Communist Party. . . . I am not a Communist; I am a Socialist. My party is not the Communist Party; it is the Socialist Party. We cannot go in."

John A. Cervenka[1] to EVD

November 1, 1920
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Sir:

The American Czechoslovak Legion,[2] together with the fraternal and educational societies conducted a bazaar for the benefit of their wounded comrades and their widows and orphans on Sept. 22-26 at Chicago, Ill.

A contest was held at this bazaar as to who were the most popular

citizens of the various political parties. Your name was entered by your friends and admirers.

In this contest you received 5,500 votes and therefore you were proclaimed the winner of the Socialistic Party.

Each successful winner of the various parties received, as a remembrance of the occasion, a gold star, which will be sent to you through the parcel post.

Upon receiving same, the committee would highly appreciate an acknowledgment.

John A. Cervenka
President.

[EVD note to Theodore Debs]

Please say that I am surprised, gratified, and highly complimented, and that I return my warmest thanks for the honor they have done me. I shall always cherish the star as a testimonial of their esteem and as a treasure beyond all price.

Will let you know if I get the star.

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. John A. Cervenka (1875-1951) was a longtime leader of the Czech community in Chicago and of the Czech Democrats in Cook County. Cervenka was for many years an ally of Anton Cermak, who was mayor of Chicago from 1931 until his assassination in 1933, and was appointed or elected to a number of Chicago and Cook County offices, including clerk of the probate court and county treasurer.

2. The American Czechoslovak Legion was identified on Cervenka's letterhead as an "organization for the benefit of Czechoslovak War Invalids, their Widows and Orphans in Czechoslovakia."

John Haynes Holmes to EVD

November 1, 1920
New York City

Dear Mr. Debs—

Tomorrow is Election Day! I am thinking of you tonight—and of the great host of men and women, many of them young and ardent souls, who will march to the ballot box in joy of heart because they are going to vote for *you*. Of these I am one—not one of the youngest, but one of the happiest!

You will not be elected, because we count votes by numbers and not by heart-throbs. But if we could match against the perfunctory support given to Mr. Harding and Mr. Cox, the love, devotion, {and}

reverence which weight the ballots cast in your honored name, you would be our next chief magistrate.—As it is, you are the leader of all that constitutes the hope of America to-day.

Dear comrade, beloved of men because a lover of men, I send you salutation. I do not forget that you are "wounded for our transgressions," that you are bearing our griefs and carrying our sorrows. But I find comfort for you, and us, and all this desolate and stricken world, that by your stripes we shall be healed.

Sincerely
John Haynes Holmes

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

Otto Branstetter to EVD

November 3, 1920
Chicago, Illinois

EUGENE V. DEBS

AMERICAN PEOPLE REPUDIATE WILSON, PALMER AND BURLESON. PERIOD REPUBLICAN LANDSLIDE NOT ONLY AGAINST LEAGUE OF NATIONS BUT AGAINST WILSON AND ALL HIS WORKS. PERIOD. MASS OF WORKERS NOT YET SUFFICIENTLY EDUCATED TO REALIZE FUTILITY OF THEIR REMEDY.[1] PERIOD. RETURNS TOO INCOMPLETE TO MAKE DEFINITE PREDICTIONS OF TOTAL VOTE. PERIOD. NEW YORK QUADRUPLES WISCONSIN TREBLES CALIFORNIA MINNESOTA AND RHODE ISLAND DOUBLES VOTE FOR BENSON.[2] PERIOD. MEMBERS LEGISLATURE ELECTED NEW YORK WISCONSIN AND MINNESOTA. PERIOD. ON BEHALF OF THE CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE I WISH TO THANK YOU FOR THE SPLENDID STATEMENTS ISSUED WHICH I AM SURE CONTRIBUTED LARGELY TO GRATIFYING RESULTS. PERIOD. YOUR SPLENDID COURAGE AND STEADFASTNESS HAVE BEEN THE INSPIRATION OF THE MOVEMENT. PERIOD. YOUR HEROIC EXAMPLE HAS BEEN THE GREATEST FACTOR IN RALLYING THE COMRADES AND GIVING THEM THE COURAGE AND ENTHUSIASM NECESSARY TO WAGE SUCH A SUCCESSFUL CAMPAIGN AND REHABILITATE THE PARTY AS A FACTOR IN THE POLITICAL LIFE OF THIS NATION. WITH FRATERNAL LOVE AND GREETINGS FROM THE MILLION AND A HALF SOCIALIST VOTERS.

OTTO BRANSTETTER.
(PAID BY NATIONAL OFFICE SOCIALIST PARTY)

Telegram, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. In the 1920 election, Debs received 913,664 votes, about 3.5 percent of the total cast and roughly half the share of the votes he got in 1912.

2. Allan L. Benson, the Socialist party candidate for president in 1916, received 589,924 votes, 3.18 percent of the total cast.

C. E. McKean[1] to EVD

November 3, 1920
Paradise, North Dakota

Dear Gene

Just to let you know that we will *never* forget you I am sending this note.

Ours is a Small Precinct away out of civilization on the Cannon Ball 80 miles SW of Bismarck our women sure Remembers *you* as the Champion for all thoes years

we Love you
C E McKean

that old one armed man who came 82 miles to hear you speck at Bismarck and walked 50 of it

Nov 3rd 1920

C. E. McKean
Paradise N.D.

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. The Grant County, North Dakota, directory for 1920 lists Charles E. McKean as a farmer.

Joseph E. Cohen[1] to EVD

November 4, 1920
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Dear Gene:

It was a magnificent vote, one that did you proud and will establish Socialism in America on a solid foundation. The gentlemen who trafficked in our liberties have earned a well-deserved rest and they will get it in oblivion.

Your soul was the inspiration of the movement, and now you must be with us soon in body, too! We must have you.

Philadelphia cast over 18,000 votes, with only a quarter of the precincts watched. And you know what a miserable failure Philadelphia election officers are at counting! Our vote is triple that of four years ago, and double that of 1912 when you ran.

Now, we are going in for intense education and organization!

All good cheer!

As ever, Yours,
Jos. E. Cohen

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Joseph E. Cohen (1882-1950) was the son of Debs's old friend Joseph Cohen. Like his father, Cohen was a leader in the International Typographical Union and the Socialist party in Philadelphia and was a delegate to the party's national conventions between 1908 and 1920. In 1924, Cohen became an associate editor of the *New Leader* and his articles appeared regularly in that paper. He later served as legislative director for the CIO in Pennsylvania. *New York Times,* June 15, 1950.

Estie Burger Bowers[1] to EVD

November 6, 1920
Winston-Salem, North Carolina

Dear Comrade

First—I will say how glad I am of the number of votes you got. And the great increase in the Socialist vote generally. And that it may mean freedom for all those who should have been out long ago.

If out of this great increased vote, the majority will get to work for the next four years wonderful things may be done.

Here in this State the Democratic vote was increased. So you see it will be a hard fight here and so few to do it.

But I do hope the whole state can be organized. Some of the counties didnt even have a National ticket out. Mr. W.B. Taylor[2] headed the State Ticket for Gov. Seven all of my family including myself voted the straight Socialist ticket, National, State & County. I feel as if that is so little to do for you when you have done so much for mine and for the world. For I am sure your kindness and influence reaches out of America. It make one feel ashamed when they think of you, Kate O'Hare, and many others who have given so much.

I am mailing you some papers and the real part of the Clerks Magazine.[3] We have just gotten the first copy of the "Rip-Saw"[4] of course you have it too. And it is wonderful. I hope we may soon have Kate O'Hare here again.

Hoping you may soon be out as our great leader through the next four years

Yours for a better world
Estie Burger Bowers
741 South-Green St
Winston-Salem
N. C.

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Estie Burger Bowers (1870-1938) was born in Roanoke, Virginia, and moved to Winston-Salem in 1912. Her husband, J. W. Bowers, and her sons worked on the railroads out of Winston-Salem. *Winston-Salem Journal,* September 19, 1938.

2. W. B. Taylor received 336 votes as the Socialist party candidate for governor in 1920. *North Carolina Manual 1920,* 120.

3. Probably the *Railway Clerks Magazine.* Mrs. Bowers's son-in-law was a clerk on the Southern Railway.

4. Following her release from prison, Kate Richards O'Hare became chief editor and Frank O'Hare managing editor of the resurrected *National Rip-Saw,* the first issue of which appeared in November 1920. "Eugene V. Debs Welcomes Rip-Saw" appeared in *Appeal to Reason,* August 28, 1920.

Louis Mayer to EVD

November 7, 1920
New York City

Beloved Gene:

It's a long time since the mails brought you a greeting from me. But Burleson[1] is a cumbersome agent and so are the messages he carries, of which, I'm afraid, you get more than you can comfortably handle.

Yet I, like the other thousands who are linked to you in devoted comradeship, must resort to the Burleson test to make sure our "Wireless" has not run down in voltage.

If the "wireless" did its full duty last night, every cell of your great big receiver was kept throbbing. At Art Young's "Good Morning"[2] dinner the individual instruments were keyed up to such a pitch that they brought your presence into our midst. We cheered & rose to greet you on Dave Karsner's reminder of your birthday. I sat next to Scott Nearing who immediately on his return from France, three weeks ago, jumped right into the campaign working heart & soul for the principles written on the banner pressed into your hands these many years. *Helen Keller was there too*!

All of us are aware that the confusion in the following ranks is criticised less harshly by you than by any of the "side captains" that tried to keep the lines in tact.—Uphill roads, disappointments—who knows them better than you? and who is therefore more ready to excuse them? Equally we know that, in spite of all, your vision has not deserted you, your love and your patience are still the same!

I wish that I might travel with these lines—feel again the touch of your loving hands and look into the kindly eyes that have done more to take the chill out of this world of ours than any other pair I know of.

I hear from Harvey Minns[3] frequently—he is holding on bravely. I'm afraid I have neglected your brother Theodore your devoted pal, but I'll try to make amends shortly.—Glad always to hear about you my household joins in reassuring you of our love—

devotedly,
Louis Mayer

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Albert Sidney Burleson, Wilson's postmaster general.
2. From 1919 to 1921, Art Young edited and published *Good Morning*, in which he combined humor, political satire, and a sustained attack on capitalism.
3. Harvey Minns (1850-1925) was an Akron, Ohio, photographer whose portraits were eventually shown and acclaimed in galleries throughout the United States and Europe. *Camera Arts*, November-December 1981. Debs sat for Mayer's bust in Minns's studio in Akron during his trial in 1918. In a letter to Debs, January 7, 1920, Minns called Debs "the whole world's greatest example of love and beauty." InTI, Debs Collection.

Rena Mooney to Theodore Debs

November 11, 1920
San Francisco, California

My Dear Theodore:—

Yours and Gertrude's words of love and cheer came as a ray of sunshine, and although my wrist is broken will drop a line of personal greeting and appreciation although written words seem inadequate.

You were always the same dear comrades, never forgetting others, no matter how much persecution your own dear ones are receiving. How often I think of our beloved Gene, and the recent election tells us how he is remembered all over the country. Tom speakes of him almost every time I see him, you know I met Tom just previous to the famous "Red Special" trip. How well I remember when Gene

was here, shortly after Tom and I were married, he took me in his arms, kissed me and said he loved me because he loved Tom.

When you write Gene give him our love, and if it would be possible to get us a line {from him} we would be more than glad to publish it in the paper;[1] if that is not possible, anything you might have would be appreciated.

Will give your message of love to Tom saturday, and in return accept ours,

Yours in the struggle for "Justice"
Rena Mooney.

Receipt to Gertrude enclosed.[2]

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Probably *Tom Mooney's Monthly,* the first issue of which appeared in August 1920.

2. Rena Mooney was serving as secretary-treasurer of the Tom Mooney Molders Defense Committee, which solicited funds for Mooney's release.

Hattie Norris to EVD

November 11, 1920
West Monroe, Louisiana

Dear Friend:

It does seem funny or rather serious—but I had just started to tell you something that happened in school two days ago. So here it is.

Our English teacher had us to {write} on a slip of paper and hand, in five names of our best friends, and five cities that we had either lived or visited. I will not bother you about the cities, but the names were as follows: Eugene. V. Debs, Ben. F. Wilson,[1] Kate Richard O'Hare and Upton Sinclair. I have {left out} one which was Tom Hickey. Now that gets them all for five is the number. After I had written all of my friends names down upon the slip of paper I looked over them and thought what a fine lot of friends, and wondered if my teacher would be as pleased as myself. But alas. When she returned my paper what do you think? Well I {guess} you will be surprised, for I was. I only received the mark of 45. I diden't say a word, but yerstaday morning I took a little red rose and said to her: Here is the last Rose of Summer which I offer you. She took the rose looking puzzel and than gave me the funniest little smile and thanked me

than pined the little flower on her bosom, where she still wore it when I left school.

I am almost dishearten with school, and my feelings are so wounded that I cant study like I wish. I wish you could write me[2] and I would show the letter to my english teacher, and prove to her that you are one [of] my best Friends.

For ever your true Friend,
Hattie Norris.
Box, 146

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Benjamin Franklin Wilson, who had worked on the *Appeal to Reason* with Debs and was a lecturer and organizer for the Socialist party in the Southwest and South. He was elected a socialist member of the Kansas state legislature in 1912.

2. In a letter from Theodore Debs to Hattie Norris, November 17, 1920, Theodore told her that her "beautiful letter reached Gene and carried good cheer into his prison cell" and that "someday he will write you . . . and tell you what he has in his heart to say to you." ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

Upton Sinclair to Theodore Debs

November 13, 1920
Pasadena, California

Dear Theodore:

I do not share your hope that Gene will get out. I have no idea that Wilson will relent and I expect that Harding will be worse than Wilson in every possible way. I know of only one way in which Gene can be got out and that is by the tactics of the woman's party, the militant suffragettes. If there are fifty men and women in the country who are willing to picket the White House and to face jail and the hunger strike, they can get Gene out. I made this suggestion in the Appeal to Reason[1] and two men volunteered.[2] I have not followed the matter up because it is a little embarrassing to call on others for martyrdom, when you do not offer to lead them. I have many moods of martyrdom, but I hold myself in, because of the reasoned conviction that I can do more by writing. However, you have asked me the question, and I tell you how it can be done, as it seems to me. You know that W.W. vowed he'd never give way on suffrage; but the women made him.

I have your letter with check ordering three of the autographed books,[3] and I am putting you down accordingly. I am glad things are

going so well with you. The orders for the Debs book are coming in rapidly.

Sincerely,
U Sinclair

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. In "What Keeps Debs in Jail" (*Appeal*, September 25, 1920), Sinclair wrote that "if the workers of America really wanted Gene Debs out of jail and wanted it with sufficient energy and determination, they could make their wants heard. . . . But they do not want it, so Debs stays in jail."

2. In a letter to Debs, dated November 7, 1921, T. T. Ritter recalled that "about a year ago I wrote a letter to the Appeal . . . offering to take your place in prison and serve to the end the unexpired time of your term." See T. T. Ritter to EVD, November 7, 1921. Ritter's letter was not printed in the *Appeal*.

3. *Debs and the Poets.*

Upton Sinclair to EVD

November 16, 1920
Pasadena, California

My dear Debs:

I have read your letter regarding the gossip about "The Jungle"[1] which is going the rounds in the prison. I remember some years ago seeing a little play by the Irish players in New York, dealing with the subject of a village gossip. We saw a story start quite innocently and be repeated from one person to another and grow more and more dreadful until finally the whole village was in a state of frenzy. Apparently this same thing has happened in the present instance, and I think I can see exactly how it happened. A good many people in the prison have been reading "The Brass Check." On page 48 of this book I say: "I bought up the plates of 'The Jungle,' which Doubleday, Page and Company had allowed to go out of print. I hope some time to issue the book in a cheap edition, and to keep it in circulation until the wage-slaves of the Beef Trust have risen and achieved their freedom." And then on page 143 of "The Brass Check," I tell how "I was told by a waiter in a Los Angeles hotel that a bald-headed man had reserved a table in my name, and given an elaborate dinner, and that the hotel staff had thought they were dining me. I am wondering what would have happened in the newspapers if that bald-headed man had drunk too much champagne, and had thrown a bottle thru one of the dining-room mirrors."

It is evidently out of these few sentences that the rumor which

disturbs you has grown. I never had any "trouble" in the Hotel Alexandria, and only imagined this trouble in the manner above mentioned. And as for "The Jungle" being out of print, the only reason it has remained out of print for so many years has been because I didn't have the money to put it in print. I haven't got the money yet, but I have gone into debt and printed 5000 cloth and 10,000 paper copies of "The Jungle." My printers were beginning the shipping of these books just about the time you were writing me in great distress about this ridiculous rumor.

In order that you may prove your case, I will instruct the printers to send you one half dozen cloth and half a dozen paper copies of my new edition of "The Jungle," and you may give them to all the people who have believed this story, and tell them that if they want more copies, they can have them by the thousand for 35 cts paper and 70 cts cloth, which is a little {less} than half the price that my regular publisher would charge at the present time. I enclose herewith some circulars of "The Jungle."[2] I do not know if the prison regulations permit such enclosures in letters, but if they do, you will see that I am doing my best to sell the book. I have printed 100,000 of these circulars so far, and I don't think the most skeptical inmate of Atlanta penitentiary will claim that they are Beef Trust propaganda!

Now about another matter, the printers have promised to start shipping Debs and The Poets November 19th. I don't know about the special edition which you are to autograph, but I will assume that it is to be shipped a few days later. I want to ask you to do the autographing as quickly as possible because I have been advertising them as a Christmas present.

Sara Bard Field[3] and C.E.S. Wood[4] ask that you will write their names in their copies. It occurs to me that you might wish to do this in the case of other copies of people personally known to you. Therefore, I am instructing my office to make an extra carbon copy of the shipping lists of these books and to send this list to you when it is ready. You will thus see who has ordered the books, and if you want to write in something special, you may do so.

I send you my love and best wishes, and I appreciate your being willing to stake your head on my not having sold out to the Beef Trust![5]

Sincerely,
U Sinclair

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Sinclair's *The Jungle*, first published in 1906, became the leading muckraking novel of the era. The new edition, published in 1920, was needed, Sinclair wrote in

a brochure advertising the book, because there "was not even a pretense that anything has been changed" in the meat-packing industry.

2. A copy of the circular is in InTI, Debs Collection.

3. Sara Bard Ehrgott Field (1882-1974) was a leading California suffragist, poet, and socialist who lived near Sinclair in Los Gatos Hills south of San Francisco. She lived with Charles Erskine Scott Wood from 1918 to 1938, when the two were married. Her poem "To Eugene Debs" appeared in *Debs and the Poets.*

4. Charles Erskine Scott Wood (1852-1944) was a West Point graduate who practiced law in Portland and San Francisco before retiring to devote his time to writing poetry and political satire. His best-known book, *Heavenly Discourses,* was published in 1927. Woods's "Debs Has Visitors," which portrayed Debs's conversations with Lincoln, Whitman, Christ, and others, was included in *Debs and the Poets.*

5. Debs's letter to Sinclair concerning the new edition of *The Jungle* has not been found, but he described his autographing copies of *Debs and the Poets* in *Walls and Bars* (Chicago, 1973), pp. 151-54.

Isabel Solomon[1] to EVD

November 16, 1920
Brooklyn, New York

Dear Mr. Debs:

I read about you in the newspapers, very often, and I read some of your speeches, although I don't understand everything for I am {only} eight years old.

I am so sorry because you are not our next president, if you were president our country would be the greatest in the world, and my daddy would not {be} ousted from the assembly.

We have your picture on our wall I would like to visit you so please let me know if I may come to see you, for I am saving my pennies.

I hope you become stronger each day. I close with lots of love from my Mother father my two little sisters and myself.

Yours for socialism
Isabel Solomon
601 Howard Ave.
Brooklyn, N.Y.

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Isabel Solomon was the daughter of Charles Solomon, one of the five socialists expelled from the New York state legislature in 1919.

Ruth Le Prade to EVD

November 20, 1920
Berkeley, California

Dear 'Gene:

It is so hard to write to you. I find it very difficult to approach the man who is to me the greatest Hero of the twentieth century, and the greatest Saint and Martyr that our Movement has yet produced! Words fail me—knowing my unworthiness I am silent. Only in deeds, dear 'Gene will I ever be able to express my appreciation of your magnificence, and of the sublime inspiration which you are to me always. And so I can say little—but lay my whole life at your feet, hoping that in future years it may prove itself to be, in some small degree, worthy of you!

The little book, "Debs and the Poets," is such a small offering to you. I would it were in my power to serve you in a way that would be worthy of you. I would gladly give my life to see your body free! (I do not say to see *you* free, for you are the freest man I know, it is only your body which is caged in that hell hole, your Soul they cannot reach) But it seems there is so little I can do; and so I beat my wings against the prison of my inadequacy. Now that the little service which has made life possible for me during the past year is finished, I do not know where to turn, what to do. How can I serve you *now* 'Gene? What can I do? I am yours to command to the end of life's journey!

Your poem,[1] which came to me thru dear Mabel Dunlap Curry, is one of the most beautiful things I have ever seen. I believe it will live in literature. It would have been the crowning touch in the little book! I cannot express how disappointed and unhappy it makes me that it came too late, after the plates were made, the pages numbered, etc. Personally I consider this poem finer than any of the fine things that have been written *about* you. What a pity, what a pity!

I am disappointed in Upton Sinclair for several reasons, chiefly because he had insisted upon referring to the greatest man of our century as "old";[2] a man whose heart blossoms with the flowers of May and thrills with eternal Spring. I have protested to him about this upon several occasions, and trust he will seek to remedy the mistake in future advertizing of the book.

We sent the Birthday book on to Theodore as you will probably not be allowed to have it at the prison. Harold[3] did almost all of the work, framing the letters, etc. I fear it would have been very crude had I made it myself. We thought you might like to have these orig-

inals. To complete the book it should have your poem—and some day perhaps you will copy it in.

The inspiration of your glorious stand for human Freedom thrills the hearts of all lovers of Liberty the world round. 'Gene I wonder if you realize how much you mean to us—the full greatness of your contribution to the Cause! In your sublime beauty you are a prophecy of what man may become! Each passing year will add to the splendor of your fame, each passing year will bring you new lovers and disciples, eager to consecrate their all to the realization of your Dream. You stand today the greatest living Hero of the Revolution!

In the Eternal Love of Comrades I hail your Unconquerable Soul,

Ruth Le Prade

P.S. 'Gene, will you do me a very great favor? The five hundred copies which are to come to you for your autograph will be numbered. I am to have two of these copies: one is for a very dear friend, and one is for myself. You have probably heard me speak of this friend, Kate Crane Gartz[4] of Altadena California. She is one of the most remarkable women now living, and one of your greatest lovers. She has suffered much, and is consecrated with her whole soul to the Cause. She it is who made it possible for me to collect and publish the material in the little book, and so it is really her work as well as mine. She is a sort of Fairy God Mother to the Cause in these parts, always encouraging, helping, and giving away everything that she has. And during the soul testing times thru which the world has just been passing she too has remained "as firm as granite." I know you would love her dear 'Gene if you could look into her beautiful face, and into that great heart, which reaches out like your own to unfold all humanity. Now the favor that I am asking is this—that you will autograph for this noble Comrade the first copy of the autographed edition, *Number One.* No one would appreciate it more than she, and no one is more worthy. If you should find the time to copy your beautiful poem in her volume, and also in the one that is to come to me it would make me very happy. You have done so much for us that I hesitate to ask this of you, but I trust it will not be a burden on you. Thanking you a thousand times, I am eternally your debtor.

Ruth

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Debs's poem has not been found.

2. In his introduction to *Debs and the Poets,* Sinclair wrote that "the government regards this old man as a common felon and treats him as such."

3. Harold Story (1890-1977), Le Prade's husband, who was in school at Berkeley at the time.

4. Kate Elizabeth Crane-Gartz (1865-1949) was the daughter and one of the heirs to the fortune of Richard Teller Crane, a leading inventor and manufacturer of metal products. One of her brothers, Richard Teller Crane, Jr., served as private secretary to Secretary of State Robert Lansing from 1915 to 1919 and as United States ambassador to Czechoslovakia from 1919 to 1921. Another brother, Charles Richard Crane, was United States minister to China in 1920-21. Crane-Gartz's financial support of and active role in socialist and other radical causes in California and elsewhere led Mary Craig Sinclair to describe her admiringly as a "parlor Bolshevik" and "millionaire Socialist" in an introduction to a collection of Crane-Gartz's letters, *The Parlor Provocateur* (Pasadena, 1923).

Joseph W. Sharts to EVD

November 24, 1920
Dayton, Ohio

Dear Gene:

I have just got back from a three day jury trial at Troy, tuckered out, and I was running thru my mail trying to get thru and lock up and go home, when like a flash it came on me tomorrow is Thanksgiving Day and you are still down there. Maybe you think because I have not been writing you I have been forgetful of you. Let me make a report to my superior officer. I have been doing something better than writing you letters of sympathy. You know I edit the "Miami Valley Socialist."[1] Well, months before the election I made them pay me a salary, the salary to be 100 copies of the paper. Every Sunday morning my wife Ruth and I have gone out with those 100 papers and distributed them from door to door. Election day came, and we decided we couldn't stop while you and the others are in prison, so we are still doing it. I give my week days to making my living, and my sundays and evenings to editing the paper. It is now the "state paper" for Ohio. You know how the Left Wing movement ripped up the Socialist party in Ohio. It left us nothing. It carried off our state paper (the "Toiler"), our state office, supplies, lists of members, funds, everything, destroyed every local. A pitiful little remnant held a sort of convention at Columbus at our own expense, and re-opened a State Office, with Willert[2] of Cleveland as State Secretary. The Communist obsession hit Ohio worse than any other state. It was dreary work trying to rekindle interest in the Socialist Party. Here and there a handful organized a local again. The Jews and the Finns were about all that stuck,—except one or two old locals like Dayton. Then came

the campaign. Under the Ohio law to get our ticket on the ballot it was necessary to file petitions with 10,000 signatures. We printed the petition blanks here at Dayton and mailed them to everybody in the State who showed any signs of interest. The M.V.S. drummed it into them that those signatures had to be got. Gene, old scout, the socialists woke up. We sent the petitions across and landed on the ballot,—while the Farmer-Labor Party (with Max Hayes of Cleveland as its Vice Presidential candidate) fell down.[3] We had no platform orators left in Ohio; all the orators went into the CLP. We secured a few outside speakers like Tucker, Engdahl, Kirkpatrick,[4] and Kate Richards O'Hare for a few dates. But the rest we had to do ourselves. I am a poor speaker; but I took a little pledge I would fill every speaking date I could get up to election day. I spoke every night, street corners, hall meetings, one colored methodist church. Other Socialists who make no claim to oratory were doing the same in Ohio, I know. You wonder why I detail all this to you? It is because the Socialist official vote in Ohio for Eugene V. Debs was 57,147. We are back in the party with the fat off and our muscles hard. Sunday, Dec. 5, I am going up to Akron to debate Marguerite Prevey[5] on: "Resolved, that industrial action is all important for the emancipation of the workers"; and I am going to bring back her scalp and her application for reinstatment in the S.P.

The longer they keep you in there, the harder I am going to work. And my wife too. She cast her first vote November 2nd, and she said it gave her an exalted feeling all day to think she had made her cross under the Arm and Torch[6] with Gene Debs's name there. When you come out, one of your first dates will have to be in Dayton, Ohio, which will be Socialist in 1921. And you will have to come the day before and spend the night at my house, and the day with my family and me.

I am sending you greetings from Dan Farrell, Shorty Motter, (the blacksmith), Joe Woodward,[7] and the other old-timers around here. We sent Mrs. Debs a little Thanksgiving remembrance last Friday at the Local, because we weren't sure we could get it to you.

Yours for the Revolution,
Joseph W. Sharts

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. The *Miami Valley Socialist,* a weekly, was published in Dayton.
2. John G. Willert.
3. As noted, Parley P. Christensen was the Farmer-Labor party presidential candidate in 1920.
4. Irwin St. John Tucker, John Louis Engdahl, and George Ross Kirkpatrick.
5. Prevey had joined the Ohio Communist Labor party.

6. The Socialist party ballot symbol.

7. Daniel Farrell, head of the carpenters' union in Dayton; Elmer E. Motter; and Joseph Woodward, head of the Dayton machinists' local, made up the Dayton delegation that greeted Debs in Terre Haute following his release in December 1921. *Terre Haute Post,* December 28, 1921. All three were Socialist party candidates for local offices in Dayton in 1920. *Miami Valley Socialist,* July 30, 1920.

EVD to Theodore Debs

November 25, 1920
Atlanta, Georgia

My dearly beloved Theodore,

We are allowed an extra letter today on account of Thanksgiving, and my heart turns to you and dear Gertrude and Marguerite with all the loving greetings of the day and all the good wishes in the world. It would be such a joy to see your dear faces again and press you in my arms once more but as this may not be the written pages will serve to tell you that I feel your loving presence here and that even the shadow of you is to me a source of inexpressible comfort and consolation. The miles do not divide us. I can hear your loving heart-beats and know that by day and by night you are always near me. We have had our trials since we parted in the flesh, but we have also had our compensations, and we have every reason to give thanks today with all our hearts. We are doing in our small way what numberless others have before us in the service of truth and justice, and we were weak and unworthy indeed if we made complaints instead of feeling it a privilege to be chosen to do our part in [one word illegible] the ills and wrongs of our times and bringing better and brighter days to the world. It is enough for us to know that our cause is righteous and that if we are faithful and do our duty it is certain to be crowned with victory in the end. I am very glad you are to attend the coming meeting of the Natl. Executive Board at Chicago. You will be of value to the members and they will be happy to have you with them. They are a fine body of men and you will enjoy their company. What fine and beautiful comrades we have! What rare souls have rallied to us and stood by us through all that has come with a devotion too deep for words and without care or shadow of turning! How rich and grateful we should feel and how highly resolved to be true to them and to our trust to the last breath of life!

Saturday December 4th our revered "Dandy," had he lived, would be one hundred years old. What deep love and reverence the very

thought of his noble memory inspires! On that day we shall stand lovingly where "Dandy" and "Daisy" rest and pay to their sweet memory the tributes of our tears—tell dear Gertrude no day passes that my blessing does not go to her and dear Marguerite. We have had many beautiful days together and perhaps we may have again. Sweet Marguerite's picture is always before me and she smiles into my eyes many times during the day. I love and embrace and kiss you all.

Faithfully and eternally yours
Eugene V. Debs
#9653

Have never a care for me. I am better off than all the rest. You can rest assured that I am well and eating and that all is well here.

Please give my love to dear Mary[1] and all the Comrades at home.

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Debs's sister, Marie Debs Heinl.

EVD to Theodore Debs?

[December 1920]
Atlanta, Georgia

Back of the hospital the empty Christmas boxes are piled after the contents have been delivered to the prisoners. I stood there this morning meditating about it all, seeing the senders in my mind's eye, invariably women, nearly all poor, packing these boxes with busy fingers and anxious, loving hearts, and sealing them with their tears, and in noting the addresses one of them caught my eye and a strange impulse seized me to cut it from the box and send it to you, and I think that when you come to look it over you[1] will discover the reason why. Incidentally the recipient of this box used to be a naval officer.

AL, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. The enclosure has not been found.

EVD to Theodore Debs

December 3, [1920]
Atlanta, Georgia

My very dear Theo:

Yours of the 1st with enclosures just at hand—it gave me unspeakable joy. Each word was eagerly absorbed. I am happier than you know about your eyes. It was on my mind and now that I know you're safe, I'm happy as if it had been my own sight. Dr. Sattler is a fine soul, a choice and beautiful spirit, as well as a master specialist, and it is most gratifying to have his confidence and esteem.

Mabel, faithful soul that she is in all things, has kept me well informed. She worried more about your eyes, I dare say, than you did yourself. She saddened over the least unfavorable symptom but she never let you know it, and she rejoiced with all her loving heart at every favorable turn. In every letter she has something fine and beautiful to say about you. Never a word of complaint or objection has fallen from her pen. She has asked only to serve us in our greatest need and this has been her supreme joy & reward—all she ever expects or desires. Mabel has certainly been a God's own blessing to us all, to you in particular, and to me in a thousand ways. We owe this great, beautiful, devoted Soul everything! There is no other like her. No one else in all the world could or would have done for us and for the cause under the same circumstances. And she has done it with all her heart and soul and without any further thought of compensation than the moral satisfaction of having stood by us in our trouble. We owe her everything and we shall have to pass along in her debt for we shall never be able to repay her here or hereafter. She has in fullest measure all the splendid qualifications for her self-appointed task, and she freely gives us the benefit of them all. Her brilliant mind, her ready grasp, her clear insight, her keen intuition, her infallible judgment, her wide range of vision, and her marvellous understanding more and more amaze me.

The two letters from dear Comrade Rendle[1] touched all my heart-strings and filled me with the tenderest emotions. I read both with infinite satisfaction and delight. He has the fine spirit of a true comrade and the high courage of a crusader. His letter to Wilson cuts clean and burns like a devouring flame. God, if we only had such *men* with us, how even the oppression would cease and the people be free! He's every inch a man and every atom a comrade, and I read also with joy of his loyal family—his noble wife, his fine son and his heroic Mother-in-law at 80 with the Socialist ballot in her hands—& the red

banner in her heart! It is all full of inspiration and you will write and express the thanks and love and devotion of us all to this right royal family!

I must call your attention to the fact that there is a page in your letter missing. Perhaps you failed to enclose it with the rest. Page 3 leaves off abruptly with an unfinished sentence and there is no page 4.

Of course you did right in giving Ervin[2] of the Call consent to the use of my name for the dollar fund.[3] You are right in assuming I would have done the same and I am glad you did it for me—I'm distressed about that infernal lumbago getting under your skin. Perhaps it's to keep you {from} getting too frisky over your eyes—Anyway it's the devil's own torment and I wouldn't inflict it on an enemy's dog—and you know that I know what it is. I hope it has let go by now and that it will not plague you again this century.

I note what you say about Bob Minor and what he said about me in the N.Y. meeting,[4] and I am not much surprised. I would only like to have {had} the platform before the same audience 30 minutes when he got through. It ill becomes him to talk about "changing one's mind," for it was he who wrote the letter about the Russian Soviet Republic & the Bolsheviks to the N.Y. *World,* after he had been to Russia, in which he utterly decried and discredited the Russian revolution & the Bolsheviki,[5] while I was outstanding & speaking for both at the risk of my life, and his article was flashed over the country and copied in full and commented on by the whole capitalist press and did irreparable damage to the Russian cause. Later he realized his mistake (!) and he very suddenly switched and "changed his mind," and in a series of articles & lectures published in the Liberator[6] he explained that he was wrong—and made a complete change of front—When he says that the socialism we stand for is allied with the League of Nations at Paris he is simply idiotic, and he is in the same non-compusmentis state when he says that Wilson will let me out because I am not for the 3d International.

Minor says when I went to prison I publicly announced my adherence to the 3d International. He either lies or does not know, in his wild harangings, what he is talking about. I declared my loyalty to the Russian Revolution, the Soviet Republic and the Bolsheviki. But the Soviet Republic is not the Third International. The latter was not organized for nearly two years after the Soviet Republic was proclaimed, and Zinoviev, the Chairman of the Moscow 3d International Executive Committee in the conditions he laid down in his letters to the Independent Socialists of Germany & the Independent Labor Party of England, committing the Socialist parties of all coun-

tries to armed insurrection and bloody revolution, whether or not, made it impossible for our party to subscribe to that program and live, and therefore I expressed myself opposed to joining the Moscow International *while those impossible conditions obtained,* but that was long after I was here in prison. The conditions laid down by Zinoviev split the socialist parties of all countries wide open & they have been fighting each other ever since to the supreme delight of the capitalists, while in this country the Communist party & the Com. Labor party that declared for the 3d International can't hold a meeting and don't dare to show their heads. Marguerite Prevey could throw some light on this point—they have all got about all they want of the Zinoviev program of bloody violence. When he says I have allied myself with the League of Nations he caps the climax as a damned liar and I simply let him alone—He is one of the revolutionary (!) communists who did all they could against the Socialist party in the last election.

I am glad Gertrude and Marguerite are well. They are always in my heart. Sweet Marguerite's picture is always before me looking lovingly into my eyes. Put your arms about them and love and kiss them for me. Give my best to the Trinkles, Phil, the Bemises, and others.

Till the last turning!
Gene

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. In a letter to the attorney general, dated June 2, 1919, M. A. Rendle of Craig, Missouri, asked, "What part of the Constitution of the United States of America Gave lawyers the Right to pass the Espionage Law [under which Debs was convicted]?" National Archives, Records of the Department of Justice, Record Group 60, File 77175.

2. Charles W. Ervin, editor of the *New York Call.*

3. In a series of statements in the *Call,* "Did You Do It?" (December 21, 1920), "Will He Find Your Name on the List?" (December 27, 1920), Debs urged readers to send "a Christmas Present to the *Call.*"

4. At a meeting at the Bronx Community Forum on November 28, 1920, Robert Minor said that in return for "Debs' stand against the Moscow International, A. Mitchell Palmer would effect his release from the Atlanta Penitentiary." *New York Call,* November 29, 1920. In a letter to the *Call,* December 2, 1920, Minor claimed that his "remarks were misunderstood," that he had "not intended to impugn Debs' courage and motives."

5. Minor's attack on Lenin and the Soviet government is summarized in the *Liberator,* March 1919.

6. Robert Minor, "I Change My Mind," *Liberator,* October 1920, and "Answer to My Critics," *Liberator,* November 1920.

Kate Richards O'Hare to EVD

December 3, 1920
Washington, D.C.

EUGENE V. DEBS

BENJAMIN SALMON[1] RELEASED FROM PRISON HERE WILL NOT TAKE FOOD UNTIL YOU ARE RELEASED IS IN A DANGEROUS CONDITION WIRE HIM NINETEEN TWENTY SIX NEW HAMPSHIRE WASHINGTON THAT HE WILL SERVE MORE WISELY TO TAKE FOOD AND MAKE THE FIGHT SOME OTHER WAY

KATE RICHARDS OHARE

Telegram, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Benjamin Salmon was identified in the *Atlanta Georgian* (December 1, 1920) as "a conscientious objector of Denver, a prisoner at the Walter Reed hospital where he has been on a hunger strike as a protest against his confinement." Salmon had "begun a new hunger strike as a Christian protest against the imprisonment of Eugene V. Debs and his fellow prisoners." His hunger strike and release were described in the *New York Times*, August 5, November 25, 1920.

EVD to Winnie Branstetter

December 9, 1920
Atlanta, Georgia

Pls. send this to Winnie Branstetter

Dear Comrade Winnie,

Will you not kindly drop a line to Warden Zerbst and ask him to authorize Comrade Joe Coldwell to take charge and dispose of any undelivered Christmas packages that may come here from the Prison Comfort Club. You see some of the men have gone out and others may go out, and if some arrangement of this kind is not made the packages will remain undelivered.[1] If Comrade Coldwell is authorized to dispose of them he can place them in the hands of those who are next best entitled to receive them.

Loving greetings to you all!

Your comrade,
E. V. Debs

ALS, NcD, Socialist Party Papers.

1. The Prison Comfort Club project to "send messages of love" to "more than two hundred political prisoners" is described in *New Day*, December 18, 1920.

Hattie Norris to EVD

December 9, 1920
West Monroe, Louisiana

My Dear Comrade:

I dont think you will mind me useing my pencil, for I have left my ink at school and am sick and could not go to school to-day.

How is the prison cell—these lonesome days of the twenth centure? Fine I do hope for all of your sakes.

The days winds around ever sure of the roads of life with close edges, and scrapes the very soul of humanity with out mercy. The people are asleep and seems they are going to fall back in-to the dark ages.

"Let your light so shine that others may see your good works!" How can you show your good works when your light is not allowed to burn, but thrown back into some dark cell and trampled with iron feet until even hope is destroyed. (But listen!) not every hope for there is yet one bright little spark in that dark cell, and is growing larger every day unnoticed. It soon will be a real light and all the people shall see and know it.

You just dont know it makes me feel, to see that none of my schoolmates care or thinks nothing about the condition of the world.[1]

I have made good grades on French, Algebra, Domestic Science and Spelling this month's test, but alas! English has fell to the bottom.

Our History teacher is the only Comrade we have in high school, and it happens that I dont take history this school. She is a grand little woman.

Your most devoted true Friend
Hattie Norris
Box 146

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Theodore Debs wrote to Hattie Norris on December 19, 1920, to thank her for this letter and to say that "I know you must be lonely among so many who do not understand your point of view but you have the consolation of knowing there is a rich soil for the seeds you are sowing." InTI, Debs Collection.

Winnie Branstetter to EVD

December 20, 1920
Chicago, Illinois

My dear Comrade:

Your little note under date of December 29th[1] has been forwarded me by our Comrade Curry. The cost of your Christmas box will as you so lovingly request be given in Christmas toys to a destitute child in Chicago.[2]

One of our little girls in the office, a fourteen-year old child who is working from 3:30 to 5:30 in order that she may attend Business College has undertaken the pleasant duty of preparing your Christmas gift for such a little child.[3]

You will be glad to know, that through the splendid co-operation of comrades throughout the United States and the Defense Committee of the I.W.W. Organization, we have been able to send warm winter clothing to the children of every political prisoner.

We have sent over $300.00 worth of winter underwear and sweaters to all politicals and this winter made three shipments of food to all politicals. I feel that in justice to the dozens of comrades who have contributed to this fund and the National Executive Committee of the Socialist Party who has entered whole heartedly into the work of this Department of the National Office that you and other comrades should understand that I am only acting as agent of these great forces.

It is pleasant to receive the beautiful letters from our comrades in prison and that privilege pays me a thousand times for my efforts in their behalf and I do want them to realize that their comforts come not because of me but because of the love and sympathy of hundreds of other comrades throughout the United States.

Your friends in the National Office all send their dearest love and the season's greetings for you friend and comrade.

Fraternally,
Winnie Branstetter

TLc, NcD, Socialist Party Papers.

1. Obviously a mistaken date.

2. In Debs's letter to Winnie Branstetter (*New York Call*, December 25, 1920), he asked Branstetter "not to send me a Christmas package, as I am well cared for here, but kindly invest the equivalent in a doll and some candy and nuts for some poor little girl in Chicago."

3. The *Call* story (December 25, 1920) that printed the Debs-Branstetter letter identified "Inez Boughner, the youngest girl in the [Socialist party national] office," as the girl who selected the Chicago girl to receive gifts.

Joseph E. Cohen to EVD

December 20, 1920
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Dear Gene:

Let me thank you most heartily for your more than kind sentiment that comes to me from Theodore,[1] also for having mentioned me to Samuel Moore as one who might, however slightly, lift the weight of the crushing burden which must be his. I was only too glad to render him the slight service he asked for, and, which poor fellow, he feels will give him a few happy hours. And I am only sorry I am not given the power to do more.

Needless to say, I accepted the kind words he said to me for you. The outpouring of your noble spirit, and out of all proportion to my poor deserts. How can I help prizing such a generous friend and rare soul?

I have been hoping that Christmas would see you among us again and the doors would be open for all who, in a way that is past the understanding of the rulers tried to and did serve the cause of peace and good will. I can only hope that the day of your release and our rejoicing is near at hand, and that America may once again be all free!

One thing we know, next year promises a richer harvest for human kind than the past.

All love!

As ever, yours,
Jos. E. Cohen

TLS, NNU Tam, Debs Collection.

1. Theodore Debs's letter to Cohen, December 17, 1920, praised his service to "the movement" and called him "too modest to share in its honors." InTI, Debs Collection.

Alex Rahming to EVD

December 20, 1920
New York City

My dear Eugene:—

Your reply through your Bro. rec'd sometime ago and I was more than delighted to hear from you.

I will keep always the inscription penned on the back of the envelope informing your Bro, that it was from a Colored Comrade, and if our lives be spared to meet each other, I shall present it to you as a reminder.

I am hoping dear Gene that the Cry for Justice will be heard by those who posess the power to grant it, to think that other govts who were always considered despotic and backward, has granted amnesty to those who did not subscribe to their doctrine, and America, the land of the free, has kept her noble souls behind prison bars, is enough for one to cry shame, shame.

Do not despair Gene, you will not serve ten years how soon you will be free it is difficult to say, but sooner or later, the hearts of those who are responsible for your imprisonment will be touch and while the masses will hail you as the greatest of all souls, scorn and derision will be their reward. Therefore may the day speed on, when I can grasp your hands and say my Gene, my Gene.

Wishing you a Xmas of Joy and happiness, that will be spent at home,

I am your Comrade,
Alex Rahming

[EVD note to Theodore Debs]
A dear, noble colored brother!

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

John Haynes Holmes to EVD

December 24, 1920
New York City

Dear Mr. Debs:

It has been my hope these many months that you would be released before this Christmas day. It shadows deeply our festival that this is not to be—We send you love—and prayers for the coming of that great day of "peace on earth, goodwill to men" for which you are giving your heroic life.

Sincerely
John Haynes Holmes

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

John Nearing[1] to EVD

December 24, 1920
New York City

Dear Comrade Debs

I wish you a merry Christmas and a happy new year. I have heard so much about you from my daddy and other people that I feel that I know you. Even in France last summer people asked about you. You got eight votes from my class in school last month. My little brother Bobby sends his love to you.

Yours truly
John Nearing

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Scott Nearing's son.

Elizabeth Gurley Flynn and Carlo Tresca to EVD

December 25, 1920
New York City

EUGENE V. DEBS

OUR LOVE AND GOOD WISHES FOR SPEEDY LIBERATION ARE WITH YOU ON CHRISTMAS DAY WE APPRECIATE YOUR SACRIFICE AND SPLENDID SPIRIT AND HOPE IT WILL BE REWARDED BY LOYALTY OF LABOR

ELIZABETH GURLEY FLYNN AND CARLO TRESCA

Telegram, InTI, Debs Collection.

Hattie Norris to EVD

December 25, 1920
West Monroe, Louisiana

My Dearest True Friend:

Yes! it is rather lonely to live among people who dont care for things that intrest you. The only things I have to enjoy is natures gifts and to think of the comming future, but most of all is reading your promising letters. The letter you addressed to us in the, "New

Day."[1] has sent my heart thrilling with joy and saddness. Everybody reads it that I show it to, and thinks it wonderful.

The trouble with the most of the people here, is, they dont even know about you being in prison, and when I tell them they always ask for what was you put in prison for. I always answer them: Comrade Eugene V. Debs was cast in the Atlanta Federal Prison because he is too wise for the *Ruling Class* of to-day. I have learned that most people thinks it a disgrace to be in prison making no difference how came you there.

We have gone our last school day this year, and I do hope that the "New Year" shall be so much more brighter and happer that we shall look upon this old one as a past dream. Some people are agreeable in ways, but very ungracious, and most of all ignorant. They goe their way in life buy fearful leaps, and do not consider the dreadful disasters, which might befallen them in the near future.

The whole family sends you best wishes for a very happy "New Year, and a speadly release from that dreadful prison.

Lovenly,
Hattie Norris[2]

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. The party's national paper, *Eye-Opener*, was succeeded by *New Day* in June 1920. In "To the Children" (*New Day*, November 20, 1920), Debs wrote that under socialism "the children of the future shall be free and the earth shall be their playground."

2. Theodore Debs answered Hattie Norris's Christmas letter to Debs on December 29, 1920, and quoted Debs's prophecy that "she is going to shine in the darkness down there." InTI, Debs Collection.

Rubie Eastwood[1] to EVD

December 27, 1920
Aurora, Missouri

Dear friend:

In your busy, eventful life {do} you take time to remember the old times in Girard when you supplied the many hungry children with candy and other sweets? At least one of those children remembers you and thinks of you often I have thot of writing to you many times but was afraid you were too busy to be bothered. But this Christmas daddy and I decided to write to you.

Since I last saw you I have grown up some being twenty-three years young. I have spent most of my life in school but am now becoming

a business woman. I was a bookkeeper last year for an oil company in Oklahoma but am now back in school learning shorthand. My brother Tom is a big boy now and is a railroad mechanic. He is now working in Frisco roundhouse near here—at Monett.[2] Neither of us have married yet, but still we have hopes. Daddy is still on his favorite work, hammering the Catholic political Machine.[3] Mamma keeps house for us and bosses the family as usual.

We all disapprove of Wilson's policy in keeping you in prison and voiced our thots by giving you four votes at the recent election. I hope Harding will prove himself to be a president and not a dictator.

Whenever you can come you will find a hearty welcome at the Eastwood's. We have no pig or dog for you to play with but we will do all in our power to entertain our old friend.

Mamma sends her love and hopes you can come eat dinner with us soon.

Love and best wishes to you from

Your friend
Rubie Eastwood

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Rubie Eastwood (1897-1926) was the daughter of Frank M. Eastwood, who had worked with Debs on the *Appeal to Reason* in Girard, Kansas.

2. Monett, Missouri.

3. One of the most rabidly anti-Catholic publications of the time, the *Menace,* a weekly paper devoted to exposing "the Roman Catholic political machine, the deadliest menace to free institutions and liberty," was published in Aurora, Missouri. A number of alumni of the *Appeal to Reason,* including Jake Sheppard, were connected with the paper, which moved to Branson, Missouri, in 1921.

Seymour Stedman to [EVD]

December 27, 1920
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Brother Debs:—

On Xmas eve I read in the news "No pardon for Debs" frankly this made Xmas anything but merry. I was indignant and angry. If Jesus should come on earth, they would grab him and throw him into the nearest cell, and howl with glee—wall st and the workers together. Oh: Well whats the use.

How deeply do I hope the new year will bring brighter days—dear comrade just aurevoir

Stedy

Irene joins with all her heart

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

EVD to Benjamin Salmon

December 31, 1920
Atlanta, Georgia

BELOVED COMRADE:

WE HONOR YOUR HEROIC SPIRIT AND YOUR NOBILITY OF SOUL, BUT WE CAN NOT CONSENT TO THE SACRIFICE OF YOUR LIFE FOR OUR FREEDOM, EVEN THOUGH IT COULD BE ACHIEVED AT SUCH AN APPALLING PRICE. PROFOUNDLY GRATEFUL FOR YOUR SELF-SACRIFICING OFFER, I BEG OF YOU IN THE NAME OF US ALL TO ABANDON YOUR PURPOSE TO DIE {FOR US} AND RESOLVE TO LIVE AND FIGHT FOR THE CAUSE WE ALL HOLD DEARER THAN LIFE. PLEASE DO US THE GREATEST FAVOR POSSIBLE AND MAKE US HAPPY BY TAKING NOURISHMENT AT ONCE AND SPARING US AND THE CAUSE YOUR PRECIOUS LIFE. WITH LOVE AND LOYALTY,

YOUR COMRADE
EUGENE V. DEBS

Telegram draft, InTI, Debs Collection.

Katherine Metzel Debs to Comrade Warbasse[1]

January 5, 1921
Terre Haute, Indiana

Dear Comrade Warbasse:

Your good letter with article enclosed is received and I thank you for your kind expressions of love and affection for us both. I had seen the article in the Call[2] and was so pleased with it.

Sorry you were mistaken about the release of Gene. I did not expect anything else so was not disappointed. Perhaps Harding will be moved if enough pressure can be brought to bear, but that is even

problematic.—It's a long weary road and the cross is often trailed in the dust, but somehow I go on and surely the road ends some where and at *some time.* I can't be *half* as courageous as I should like to be for I must be a fitting mate to such as he, who can bear anything.

You speak so kindly and good of me in that article and I appreciate it.

I remember you and your dear wife very well and the little chat we had at our front door.

Remember me most kindly to your loving wife and with all good wishes to you both, I am, believe me,

Yours fraternally
Katherine M. Debs.

ALS, NNU Tam, Debs Collection.

1. James Peter Warbasse (1866-1957) was a New York City surgeon, a pioneer in medical sociology who advocated the socialization of medicine, and a leader of the Cooperative movement in the United States. He served as president of the Cooperative League of America for twenty-five years following its founding in 1916. Warbasse's prolific writing dealt with his interests in pacifism, socialism, women's rights, birth control, civil liberties, and most of the other liberal causes of his time. Two of his most well-known books, *The Doctor and the Public* (1935) and *Cooperative Medicine* (1936), reflected his interest in the ethics and practice of medicine in the United States.

2. Warbasse's tribute to "Eugene V. Debs" appeared in the *New York Call* on December 26, 1920. In an undated note to Katherine Debs (InTI, Debs Collection), Debs asked his wife to write to Warbasse to "say that I have heard of his beautiful tribute in the *Call,* though I have not seen it, & I thank him with all my heart."

Efrem Zimbalist[1] to EVD

January 10, 1921
Atlanta, Georgia

Dear Mr. Debs

It made me very happy yesterday, to give a little pleasure to so many unfortunate people, and still more so to have the great pleasure of meeting you. I wanted to have this opportunity for a long time, and I hope we will meet again in the near future, under better circumstances.

With all the good wishes

Most sincerely
Efrem Zimbalist

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Efrem Zimbalist (1889-1985) was born in Russia and in 1911 emigrated to the United States, where he became a leading concert violinist and composer. In a note appended to his typed transcription of Zimbalist's letter (InTI, Debs Collection), Theodore Debs noted that Zimbalist "visited the prison while in Atlanta."

EVD to Theodore Debs

January 12, 1921
Atlanta, Georgia

Will you kindly drop a line or two to Virginia Bernard 111 E. 4th St. Muscatine Iowa and thank her for the beautiful box of delicious candies and cookies she sent me for Christmas. Tell her the acknowledgment would have been made sooner had I known who the box was from, but that we could not tell on account of the wrappers and cards being removed, and that I only discovered today that her name and address were written on the bottom of the box—Please say that the candies and cookies are Delicious and very much enjoyed and that I feel grateful for the kind remembrance and send greetings and all loving thoughts to her and her family. I shall always remember Muscatine. I had some bitter experience there in the early days—no money to pay my hotel bill or my fare out of there—a drunken printer got me $5. at 3 o'clock in the morning—I converted him to socialism & he afterword became the Foreman of the Appeal to Reason printing plant at Girard.[1]

21 Months ago tonight at 10 I left for Mdsville.

AL, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. In "Vale, Tom Grant" (*Appeal*, February 1, 1913), Debs recalled his Muscatine, Iowa, experience and Tom Grant's assistance to him.

[Otto Branstetter] to EVD

January 17, 1921
[Chicago, Illinois]

Dear Comrade Debs:

The various matters that have been referred to us thru Theodore have all been promptly attended to. A food draft was sent to the German in the tuberculosis camp and I had the local comrades investigate the appeal from Jamestown, N.Y. I am glad that while the

writer's condition had been quite deplorable, that he is now employed and not in need of assistance. Acknowledgment of various telegrams which lacked addresses, have been made to the proper parties.

We had a small delegation appear before the Sub-committee of the Senate Judiciary Committee on Senator France's Amnesty Resolution on January 6th. Our delegation reports that the committee is quite hopeless and that nothing much can be expected from them. The only real advantage from such delegations is in keeping the question of amnesty before the public mind thru the publicity which we get in the capitalist press. In this particular instance, we secured very little of such publicity. This is principally due to the fact that I received notice that the hearing was granted by telegraph on the 2nd and the hearing was set for the 6th. Under the circumstances, it was difficult to get a committee down there of sufficient prominence to attract attention from the capitalist papers. Of course, I wired everybody who could possibly have been of service in that way, but they were unable to go there on such short notice. Jim Maurer,[1] however, did agree to go but thru some mishap, not yet cleared up, he failed to receive a telegram informing him where the committee would meet in Washington.

I was bitterly disappointed over the failure to secure amnesty during the Christmas holidays and had practically abandoned all hope of it from the present administration. The recent newspaper reports of Palmer's position[2] I consider merely a case of his "passing the buck." I am, however, in receipt of a communication from New York City this morning which is of sufficient importance to make me slightly more optimistic.

We are getting out material for a big organization and membership campaign this week and next week we will get out our petitions for the release of political prisoners, for circulation with the intention of presenting them with the advent of the new administration.

You have no doubt heard of the withdrawal of the Finnish Federation[3] because of our failure to accept the conditions laid down by the Communist International. The Finnish Federation, however, does not expect to accept those conditions for itself. They do not intend to join the United Communist Party as directed by Moscow, nor do they intend to do secret and illegal work which will jeopardize their Federation properties, which, as you know, are extensive and valuable. In other words, it is merely a gesture. It is such revolutionary gestures that mean absolutely nothing and only serve the vanity and egotism of the comrades making them that are disrupting and destroying the movement in all countries.

We will, however, be able to hold perhaps half of the Federation

members within the Party and within a short time the Federation will perhaps lose a good percentage of those which they now retain.[4] This has been true of the Scandinavian Federation and others which withdrew from the party. They weaken the Party to that extent but do not themselves retain the members which were withdrawn. It was the same with the comrades splitting off on account of the Communist and Communist Labor Parties. The bulk of the members which we lost did not go with those parties. They simply dropped all activity and all affiliation in despair and disgust.

Fortunately, the future of the movement does not depend upon those elements. There are a hundred million people in the United States among whom we can get proselytes. It is this hundred million whom we must reach. If we can reach them or a reasonable portion of them, we will be successful. If we fail in our efforts to reach the hundred million we will not be much better off even though we retained the handful of disgruntled comrades who have left the Party. So far as I am concerned, the policy of the Party will be to reach the hundred million rather than to placate the twenty or thirty thousand.

I expect to go to Terre Haute the first Sunday in February for a party meeting there and will get to see Theodore and Mrs. Debs again.

Comrade White[5] has a splendid letter from Joe Coldwell, which we are running in this month's Socialist World.[6] Joe seems to keep his spirits up in spite of everything.

With all good wishes, I am

Fraternally yours,
[Otto Branstetter]
Executive Secretary.

TLc, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. James Hudson Maurer, president of the Pennsylvania Federation of Labor and member of the Socialist party national executive committee.

2. The *New York Times*, January 8, 1921, reported that Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer was reviewing Debs's case but had not promised to release Debs.

3. The national convention of the Finnish Socialist Federation, meeting at Waukegan, Illinois, from December 25, 1920, to January 1, 1921, "voted to withdraw from the Socialist Party," giving as its reason "the fact that the Socialist Party has not accepted the terms laid down by the Communist International." *Socialist World*, January 5, 1921.

4. In October 1921 the "reorganized Finnish Socialist Federation" convened in Fitchburg, Massachusetts, and voted to return to the Socialist party. *New Day*, October 15, 1921.

5. Bertha Hale White, office manager at the Socialist party headquarters in Chicago and assistant executive secretary of the party from 1919 until 1924, when she

was elected executive secretary, the first woman to hold that position. *New York Call,* January 16, 1924.

6. In "You All Were Right," *Socialist World,* January 5, 1921, Coldwell thanked the Prison Comfort Club for "the wonderful shower" of cards and gifts received at Atlanta and declared he "would rather be a convict in Atlanta than a miner in West Virginia. God help them—man seems to have forgotten them." The *Socialist World* began publication in July 1920, was published by the party until December 1925, and was succeeded by the *American Appeal* in January 1926.

Albert Jay Nock[1] to Theodore Debs

January 18, 1921
New York City

My dear Mr. Debs:

Will you be kind enough to accept this belated acknowledgment of your courteous letter to the *Freeman*?[2] What we did was pitifully little to call out such a message from you. It seems incredible that such a vindictive outrage could be visited upon one who never harmed anybody, and whose only offense was that he loved his fellow-creatures and would help them if he could. It is a poor consolation to be reminded that such sacrifices are never lost; but it is true, and all that a friend can offer, unhappily.

Please believe me always most truly yours,

Albert Jay Nock

[EVD note to Theodore Debs]

This very kind letter you were so good as to send was read with real appreciation. It expresses a fine spirit and a genuine sympathy which touches me. Yes, you were right about this—you always are and I owe it entirely to you and am deeply sensible of it.—

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Albert Jay Nock (1870-1945) served as an Episcopalian minister from 1897 until 1910, when he left the ministry to enter a long career as a journalist and writer. He wrote for *American Mercury* and other magazines and in 1920 launched the *Freeman,* which he edited until 1924. Thereafter, Nock lived much of the time abroad, chiefly in Belgium, and turned out a series of books, the most influential and famous of which was his autobiographical *Memories of a Superfluous Man* (1943). After World War II his ideas were believed to have influenced both the Radical Right and the New Left in American society.

2. Nock wrote frequently and admiringly of Debs in the *Freeman.* In "The Atlanta Programme" (September 29, 1920), Nock called Debs's campaign statement from Atlanta "as valuable a document of its kind as has been published in America in twenty years," and in an editorial on May 26, 1920, he said of Debs: "Few better

men have lived." Following Wilson's denial of Debs's release in January 1921, Nock wrote (February 16, 1921) that "the man in the White House knows in his anguish that it is not in his power to pardon his prisoner, for Debs in his soul is free, his voice leaps above the high walls and his name will remain honoured forever."

Gertrude Laitinen[1] to EVD

January 20, 1921
Fitchburg, Massachusetts

Dear Comrade

I just happened to think how you are shut behind the bars, and thought it would make you feel happy for awhile, if I send these few words.

I am eleven years old and I am in seventh grade, my teacher questioned me at history period in front of my class, she asked me if I like Lord Baltimore or Roger Williams and I answered I dont know whom I like best, then she asked if I like Washington I said no, if I like Lincoln. I said yes. she asked why? I answered "Yes because he freed the slaves and rose from a poor boy to a president; then she asked if I like Pershing[2] I said NO! she asked why? then I said because he is a capitalist in mind. then also she aked if I like Foch I said No![3] then she said I suppose for same reason

Then she asked what capitalists are I said they are the ones who rob the workers she said, "Well they never have robbed me of any money, I said they dont always rob of money but something more precious than money then I said its our lives also as I considered it, then I was allowed to take my seat, She continued to talk about socialism and said people who are not Christians or loyal Americans ought to go to the land they like and then she said some children in my room are not loyal and I suppose she meant me. I dont think she is a proper kind of a teacher.

I play the violin a little and I love this instrument, the weather was beautiful the first of January but today it has been very cold. Jack Frost almost pinches your nose off when I am out. As the clock is quite late Ill tell you its half past ten and you will forgive me if my writing is so bad

Yours for the Bolshevik Revolution
Gertrude Laitinen

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. A picture of Gertrude Laitinen, a Fitchburg, Massachusetts, schoolgirl, and her dog is in InTI, Debs Collection.

2. General John Joseph Pershing (1860-1948), commander of the American Expeditionary Force in Europe during World War I.

3. Field Marshal Ferdinand Foch (1851-1929), commander in chief of the Allied forces in Europe during World War I.

Lucy Robins to Theodore Debs

January 31, 1921
Washington, D.C.

MR THEODORE DEBS

DEAR COMRADE IT BREAKS MY HEART TO TELL YOU THAT THIS IS AFTER I SAW THE OFFICIAL PAPERS OF PALMERS RECOMMENDATION TO PARDON GENE AND THE OTHERS THEY COME BACK FROM THE WHITEHOUSE PARDON DENIED[1] MY MIND IS IN A WHIRL I DO NOT KNOW JUST WHAT WE OUGHT TO DO NEXT MAY CALL A CONFERENCE TO DECIDE I FEEL AS BAD AS ANY NEAR RELATIVE OF GENE I KNOW YOUR PAIN

LUCY ROBINS

Telegram, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Overruling the recommendation of Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer, President Wilson denied Debs's release on January 31, 1921. *New York Times,* February 1, 1921.

"A Brother Socialist" to EVD

February 1, 1921
St. Louis, Missouri

My Dear Mr. Debs,

I cannot help but write you a few lines and hereby heartily congratulate you that you have so faithfully stood with the working man and are still as brave as you were before you were put behind prison bars for telling the truth and nothing but the truth. I have been a member of the American Legion[1] but after I found out what Socialism is, I dropped my membership with the American Legion and at *once* became a Socialist and will always be a hard worker for the Socialist Party so long as I live. I also notice in the Paper that President Wilson refuses you a Pardon. Do not despair My Dear Mr. Debs You are honored and will never be forgotten and your Worthy Name will go

down in History the same as Abraham Lincoln, as a true lover for Freedom and Principal. God Almighty is with you and the *serpent* that sent you to prison has been punished and is now the *most* hated man in the world.

Hats off for Eugene V. Debs and the Socialist Party. I remain,

Yours very truly
A Brother Socialist

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Founded in February 1919 by Colonel Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., and other staff officers of the American Expeditionary Force, the American Legion soon became the leading veterans' organization in the United States, which included among its goals the development of "one hundred percent Americanism." In pursuit of that goal the Legion played a leading role in the Red Scare hunt for radicals and subversives and was widely criticized in liberal and socialist publications for the violence of its members' attacks on men and women suspected of less than "one hundered percent Americanism." The Legion flooded the Wilson administration with protests against Debs's release and, following his release, led local opposition to Debs's public appearances and speeches for the remainder of his life.

Kenford Nelson[1] to EVD

February 3, 1921
Racine, Wisconsin

Dear Mr. Debs—

This is just a message of good cheer to you, from a seventeen-year old boy convalescing in a tuberculosis sanatorium.

Your sacrifice for the principles of Socialism and the brotherhood of man, strikes a responsive chord in the hearts of every true American.

Mere words I know, do little to assuage the pain of imprisonment in the sunset of your life. But yet, I cannot refrain from tendering you my sincere sympathy and admiration. My wish is that I could meet you face to face, and clasp your hand and talk with you.

I have been converted to Socialism, and have, even at this youthful age, resolved to give my life to teaching its precepts and doctrines.

Fraternally Yours,
Kenford Nelson.

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Kenford Nelson (1904-1981) recovered from tuberculosis, earned bachelor's degrees in philosophy and law and a doctorate in law at the University of Wisconsin,

eventually headed the leading law firm in Racine, and served on the University of Wisconsin Board of Visitors. *Racine* (Wisconsin) *Journal Times,* February 9, 1981.

Mamie Burns to EVD

February 4, 1921
La Grange, Georgia

Dear Sir:

Ive read an article in the Journal relative {to} your bitter denunciation of Pres. Wilson & wherein you assert that his only desire is labeled with one word; "denied."[1]

I am so sorry for you, but for Pres. Wilson being denied love of the people, I must differ with you.

I am persuaded that you are bitter & rebellious and giving vent to inward ravings. A great man like you should set an example of *meekness,* & submission rather than fierce antagonism & hatred such as you evidence.

Dear Bro. how is it with your soul? Do you count this life's attainments more value than eternal reward.

God will not let us win victories by harshly denouncing his children. Pres. Wilson has been the most tried, most patient & enduring man I know of in this age, yet he would never (I believe) fling abuse at any one. The way of the transgressor is hard & when overtaken in forwardness man usually rebels instead of repenting & sinning no more. Won't you give your harshness sober reflection & see if you had not rather be close to God in love than popular with the world in hate? This is a burning search light question to consider, but when rightly & satisfactorily answered brings peace & joy that passeth all understanding. I love the staunch courage of Pres. Wilson to *do right* as he see's & feels regardless of worldly opinion and the blessings poured out upon America during last eight years was direct results I believe of divine grace and wisdom, yet the people forgot God and worshipped mammon, bitterly attacking & denouncing the Christian head of the Nation for adverseties they brought on themselves.

Where is any justice in any such? A few years ago I was deeply interested in your socialist party, but serious study of their vindictive attitude towards all things good & unselfish, convinced me that my confidence was sadly misplaced.

I am penning these lines not as a political question but to reach you heart to heart as an individual. The blind leads the blind & both fall in a ditch, there by accomplishing nothing. But if love & unsel-

fishness are the motive, tempered with forbearing patience & Kindness, God *will* aid the man.

Am enclosing some simple leaflets, not too insignificant to be carefully perused even by so great a personage as weak mortals some times think they are.

Anything I can do to make less lonely your hours, will be cheerfully done.

Sincerely
Miss Mamie Burns,
1305 Washington St.
La Grange Ga.

[EVD note to Theodore Debs]

Much as I disagree with this good woman I am bound to respect her honesty and appreciate her sincerity. I tried to keep Christians from slaughtering each other like beasts and for that I am here, and should according to her sit in meekness & submission. But Christ didn't teach that. He went after them with a bull-whip & that's why they spiked him securely to the cross. She says Wilson would not fling abuse at any one. He sat in the White House, and flashed it over the whole country that I, sitting in prison, was an "unrepentant criminal" —But we will not argue, I appreciate her fine spirit & her good intention & send her my kindest regards & best wishes—

She asks about my soul—tell her it is in perfect order, so far as I know, & neither it nor my conscience give me one bit of trouble. Pls. tell her the leaflets did not reach me—taken out by the *Prison censor.*

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Following Wilson's denial of his release on January 31, 1921, Debs, through attorney Samuel Castleton, responded in a widely reprinted statement that "it was my only fear that I might be indebted for my liberty to Woodrow Wilson . . . the most pitiful figure in history." He added: "It would be as if Benedict Arnold were to pardon George Washington." "Eugene V. Debs Pardons T. Woodrow Wilson," *American Monthly,* March 1921.

Otto Branstetter to EVD

February 7, 1921
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Comrade Debs:

Comrade Ellen Persons[1] of Chicago, one of our oldest and most faithful workers, will be to see you about Friday, the 11th. She will

bring a number of documents from the National Office, which I wish you would look over and discuss with her.

In the membership drive which we are staging for March and April we are giving prizes to the comrades securing the largest number of new applications. In addition to the prizes of books, etc. which we are offering, I am promising each one of the winning comrades a personally signed letter of appreciation from you. There will only be about fifty of such letters and I felt sure that you would have no objection to our making such a proposition.

My idea is for you not to write fifty separate letters, but to write one letter. I will have a cut made of it and facsimile printed. It will then be necessary for you only to sign them personally.

There is no prize which the comrades would appreciate more than such a personal letter from you. They will frame these letters and hand them down to their children as proof that they were loyal to Debs and the party thru this trying period.[2]

If it is possible for you to do this, I would like to have you give this letter to Comrade Persons while there. I think it should be written on the regular prison stationery and I will try to get an additional number of sheets from Warden Zerbst, upon which to print the facsimiles for your signature. Of course, {if} this is impossible we will have to use the regular stationery.

I was at Terre Haute yesterday and saw Theodore and Katherine. They are both in very good health and Theodore's eyes are much better than they were sometime ago. They are keeping up their courage during your long absence remarkably well and we discussed not only the details of the amnesty campaign, but also tentative plans for a celebration upon your home-coming.

Comrade Persons brings the love of all Chicago comrades and the assurance of their enthusiastic efforts in support of the Amnesty Campaign.

With best wishes, I am

Fraternally yours,
[Otto Branstetter]
Executive Secretary.

[EVD note to Mabel Dunlap Curry]

Please say to Otto that I shall be glad to see Comrade Persons and cooperate with her in carrying out his wishes as far as I can, but that I wish him to please commit me to no more autographing propositions. There was no end of trouble and embarrassment for the Warden, myself, and all concerned in finally autographing the books that were sent here, and the situation now is even more unfavorable. I do not

think the Warden can consent to this arrangement and I do not think he should be asked to. I am entitled to no special privileges and I want none for very good reasons that need not be explained.

Please tell him I was very glad to hear of his visit to Terre Haute and his good report from there as to Kate Theo and the Comrades, and that they were very glad to see him and enjoyed his visit and have written me a gratifying account of it. I will send my further messages to him and to the comrades at headquarters though Comrade Persons.

TLc, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Ellen Persons, a staff member at the party's national headquarters in Chicago, wrote for the *Eye-Opener* and *New Day* on women's issues. See, e.g., Persons's "Enlist Women in Our Cause," *New Day*, June 26, 1920.

2. "The Membership Drive," *Socialist World*, February 15, 1921.

Gertrude Laitinen to EVD

February 18, 1921
Fitchburg, Massachusetts

Dearest Comrade

Some days ago I received your hearty greetings, and I read them over and over again.

Today my teacher began to talk about Debs, she tried to teach the children what wrong's you have done, and how you wanted to have traitors, spies, etc.

I knew what wrongs she was telling for I have read many of your speeches and your wonderful words to the Children. I also now come to understand how teachers are paid to lie to the children and hide the truth.

We are now having for civics the American Constitution. One of the things which this constitution contains is that laws are made for the people, by the people and the other I cannot remember, but the point which I think is not right, is that "laws" are made by the people, as I think, that laws are not made by the people, but are made by representatives of capitalists. And today there would not be {over} five million unemployed if laws were made by the people there would now be a law to prevent these thousands from starving.

Mother nature today has gifted Fitchburg with beautiful weather,

I do wish mother nature would yet some day gift the workers with freedom, and you your freedom.

Yours for the World Revolution
Gertrude Laitinen

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

Katherine Metzel Debs to Grace D. Brewer

March 4, 1921
Terre Haute, Indiana

Dear Mrs Brewer:

I was so pleased to have a word from you. I often think of you both[1] and oh, so lovingly—at this minute Wilson is out of office & possibly this administration will be a nauseating memory—I have always believed him insane.

I have had no letter from Atlanta for three wks. But today had a letter from a man who was just released and he sent me the message Gene gave him to deliver. They say the ban has been raised, but I have had no letter as yet.[2] These have been trying times, indeed and the cross was heavy at times, still we lived through it all verifying the old saying "The back is made to fit the burden"

I too believe amnesty will soon be declared for all political prisoners. Remember me most kindly to your dear husband, tell him Boydie is still in Cornell and is now 22 yrs old.[3]

Love to you both.
K. M. Debs.

ALS, MiDW, Archives of Labor History and Urban Affairs, Brewer Collection.

1. Grace Brewer and her husband, George Brewer, were close associates of Debs during his years on the editorial staff of the *Appeal to Reason,* Grace as his booking agent and George as his companion on lecture tours.

2. Following the widespread publicity given his statement on Wilson's refusal to commute his sentence, Debs's writing privileges at Atlanta were suspended. A story, "Democrat Vengeance Falls upon Debs, Because He Dared Criticise Wilson He Is Put in Isolation, Not Allowed to Write to Wife or See His Attorney—Threatened with the 'Hole' on Bread and Water," *Miami Valley Socialist,* March 4, 1921, was typical of the socialist press's response to the suspension.

3. Oscar Baur, Jr., Katherine Debs's nephew, who had lived at the Debs home as a boy.

Hattie Norris to Theodore Debs

March 7, 1921
West Monroe, Louisiana

My Dear Comrade:

I had supposed from reading the "Appeal"[1] that something had happened to Comrade Eugene V. Debs, in regards to receiving mail from any except relatives, but had not the least idea he could not sent any. It indeed makes me feel sorrow to hear this as we are now rid of Wilson, I believe that President Harding will do some what better.

I would like to know how Wilson felt as he walked out of the White House March 4th. If his conscience pricked him. Did he look back and stretch his arms over the broad lands from where he stood and say:

> Lord I have done as you bid me not; I have killed and had killed; I have enjoyed the riches of the earth, and neither did I toil; I leave this day after having done all I could against thy will.

Can you guess where I am sitting while writing? I will tell if you wish to know. We live three miles from the beautiful City of W. Monroe, did live in Monroe but have bought a farm and decided would enjoy the country much better and so we do. Just out side the back yard is a grove of small trees. Woven with yellow Jessimin vines, which are in full bloom. They have the sweetest odors that perfumes the air. I am sitting under the trees. The birds seems to be perfectly happy this morning, for they are singing their best songs.

My Cousin from Canada have just paid us a visite. He is one I converted under Socalism some three years ago while in West Texas.

I sent President Harding a letter March 4th kindly asking of him to give all political prisoners their freedom. I hope all of the Comrades did as I did.

Your affectionate Comrade.
Hattie Norris

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. In the *Appeal to Reason,* March 5, 1921, readers were told that "Debs' mail is piling up in Atlanta but he is not allowed to see any of it." In a letter to Hattie Norris, March 3, 1921, Theodore Debs told her that "Gene has been shut off from the outside world and not permitted to receive or send mail." InTI, Debs Collection.

Allie Augusto et al. to EVD[1]

March 17, 1921
Atlanta, Georgia

We the undersigned having had oppertinty in the very recent Past. The Personal Association of our fellow prisioner the Hon.—Eugene V. Debs We gladly take this especial Way to convey to him our heartfelt thanks for his many Words of Kindness and helpful cheer—and our thanks for his kind and fatherly advice as to our conduct in every trial and difficulty of life both here in Prison and out in civil life Mr Debs We thank you for your Kindness your generosity and your example of Patience under this great and unmerited trial you are now Suffering—and We extend to you this Wish

when on earth your life is ended
and the Vale of death youre trod
may your name in gold be written
in the autograph of god.

Allie Augusto — Marshal Moon
Wm B McMahon — Fred Martin
[one name illegible] — F. M. Kirby
Hilbert Lee Gusing — Julius G. Brooks
Fred Ross — [one name illegible]
Westiow [?] Fernandez — [one name illegible]
[first name illegible] Cartague — Frank Stillitano
Ansel Marlow — Benj Kilgoude
Harry McDonald — Frank Ryan
John Milton Clark — George Franklin
Lucius Louis — George Slawsky
Jas. F. Parrott

[EVD note to Theodore Debs]

Please save this. *You* will know what it means to me, and you will share it with me. If you could only see these poor souls! Every one of the 1800 men here would sign it if they but had the chance. Some of these signers are white and some colored—all are alike beloved of me.

Rockefeller's gold, the whole vast pile of, is dross and dirt compared with the riches that abound in the heart-beats of these cruelly-wronged victims of man's inhumanity to man. God knows that my heart is touched and that my tears are made to flow by this sweet, tender, loving tribute from "*Les Miserables.*"

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. One of the best accounts of Debs's relationship with his fellow inmates at Atlanta is in Charles P. Sweeney, "Debs Pictured as Dominant Figure in Atlanta Prison," *New York Call*, December 2, 1921, in which Sweeney, a *New York World* correspondent, described Debs's "Christ-like attitude toward the convicts and their devotion to him."

Alexander Howat to EVD

March 23, 1921
Pittsburg, Kansas

Dear Comrade Debs:

Inclosed you will find a check for One Hundred Dollars, which is being sent to you by the instructions of our Executive Board.[1] It is not much, but we know you will appreciate it the same as you would a Thousand, not for the amount, because it is insignificant, but because of the sentiment that stands behind it.

I want to assure you, Gene, that the Mine Workers of our District hold you in the same high esteem as they have always done, and the fact that you are now in a prison cell, because you had the manhood and the moral courage to speak your sentiments, has not caused us to think less of you by any means, but rather it has caused us to respect and admire you more than ever before. I know I voice the sentiments of the Mine Workers of our entire District, when I say they are with you to a man.[2]

We admire and respect you for your fighting qualities, and because you have always raised your voice in behalf of the men and women who toil, and because we know you are honest, and because we know the ambition of your life is to improve and better the conditions of the working class of the entire Country. The One Hundred Dollars we are sending you, is not as an act of charity, but we are merely sending it along with this letter, with the good wishes of the Executive Board and the Kansas Miners, as a small evidence of the high esteem in which we hold you, and to let you know that we are with you and that we are looking forward to the day, which we hope is near at hand, when you may regain your liberty and enjoy the blessings of a free man, in which was at one time considered a free Country.

Assuring you of the good wishes of the twelve thousand Mine Workers I have the honor to represent, I am

With a great deal of respect,

Yours very truly,
Alexander Howat
President District 14.

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Howat was president of UMW District 14, which had its headquarters in Pittsburg, Kansas.

2. In "Howat Makes Plea for Debs" (*Miami Valley Socialist,* April 8, 1921), Howat demanded "an unconditional pardon" for Debs and "all political prisoners" and asked each local in his district to endorse his position.

Ralph and Janet Fenimore Korngold to Theodore Debs

March 23, 1921
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Comrade:

Your letters always bring us the keenest pleasure. The last was especially interesting, with its bit of "contraband" material.

So poor Sam[1] said too many nice things about 'Gene!

I wonder—what will Sam, and the other poor devils do, when Gene leaves?

For Gene is going to leave before long, I am sure. We just read an interview with the new Att'y General, published in the Tribune.[2] The Attorney is reported as saying he was deeply interested in Debs, and intended making his case his first business. I hope it is true.

But what will those lost souls do without their "un-official chaplain," as the Tribune reporter styles him?

Sam writes me that for the last few months he has been actually happy, and he says it is a blessed relief to feel the love of a lovable man supplant a hate of thirty years standing!

We write Sam a letter once in a while, and send papers, etc., at Gene's suggestion.

There is also another negro, Simcox, Gene told us about, but he can't read and write, so all we can send him is "regards."

At New Year's we had a note of greeting, written by Sam, and signed "*Moore, Debs, & Simcox.*" Debs, between these two negro "lifers."

There is something spiritually tremendous about it all. But how those darkies will weep when he leaves.

With best wishes, and many thanks for your letter,

Sincerely,
Ralph and Janet Korngold.
2444 Leland Ave.,
Chicago.

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. In Charles P. Sweeney's "Debs Pictured as Dominant Figure in Atlanta Prison" (*New York Call*, December 2, 1921), Samuel Moore, the black prisoner befriended by Debs at Atlanta, was described as "the worst of the bad men" in the prison, who had become Debs's "devout follower and an exemplary prisoner."

2. In "Daugherty and the Debs Case" (*Chicago Tribune*, March 19, 1921), Harry Micajah Daugherty (1860-1941), Harding's attorney general, who was dismissed by President Coolidge in 1924 following charges of corruption in the Department of Justice, was quoted as saying that he was "going to spread the papers in the Debs case out before him and tackle them . . . because he feels a human being's and a technician's interest in the case of Gene Debs."

Stephen Marion Reynolds to Theodore Debs

March 23, 1921
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Theodore,

Your letter[1] gave me the assurance I needed. I hope you saw the Article in the Tribune 19th inst. It seemed to me that Gene had (as he always does), convinced his Keepers that he radiates a power among his fellow mortals altogether for good. The Atty Gen Daugherty displayed a very humane interest, and a just-appreciation of a man who has without complaint endured extreme sacrifice for his convictions—If he acts, as seems now probable, he will impose no conditions, I am sure.—for he must know that Wilsons attitude was without Justification. No one mentions Wilson now. I do not except to you for his political decadence was complete and generally appreciated. The World will acknowledge and love Gene as we do. Present day happenings approve him, and all that he has done, to be true to his ideas.

Always Yours as ever
Stephen M. Reynolds

ALS, InH, Reynolds Collection.

1. In a letter to Reynolds, March 18, 1921, Theodore Debs told him that "the outlook for Gene's release and the release of all the political prisoners is quite assuring." InTI, Debs Collection.

Genevieve Bennett Clark to Theodore Debs

March 24, 1921
Bowling Green, Missouri

Dear Mr. Debs.

My friend Mrs Ola Hume of Bowling Green and Birdie Richards {(Mrs. Campbell of New York}[1] who was born here, have told me of their correspondence with you: It will be a year the 19th of next month (April) since a band of men and women including myself made a pilgrimage to the White House to ask President Wilson to open the prison doors and let Eugene Debs and other political prisoners go free; I headed the delegation and carried the memorial in my hand Mrs La Follette walked on one side of me and Mrs Glendower Evans[2] of Boston on the other; Although Secretary Tumulty had written our Committee a cordial note appointing the date for our reception, when we arrived on time he was not on hand to receive us; so we gave the memorial into the hands of the man that was in Mr Tumultys stead, and, from that day to this, we have never received any word, message or sign from President Wilson except his refusal publicly to accept the recommendation of his own Attorney General, up to that time I had not believed that President Wilson ever knew that we were there: I blamed Tumulty and the other attendants for the wrong done to justice and humanity.

Poor President Wilson: He knew not what he did:

The day before he was to be nominated President of the United [States] Mr Harding {& his wife} called on me: at Congress Hall Hotel and I asked him to restore to Eugene Debbs his Civil and religious liberty; He said he would give the matter his earliest consideration[3]

I see by this mornings *Globe Democrat* that your brother is to go free: God grant that this be true, Even Mitchell Palmer, couldnt stand it: so why should not President Harding do what everybody {including himself,} wanted done and get the credit for doing a very great.

When Charles II of England heard of the punishment Lord Berkly had meted out to the Virginians after the death of their leader in Bacons Rebellion, He exclaimed, "That old fool (Lord Berkly the Colonial Governor) has hung more people and shed more blood in that barren country than I here in England for the murder of my

father!" A man is known by the company he keeps, so it has been said, and Eugene Debs goes down to posterity in glorious Company.

"Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the Children of God"

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake; for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven: Blessed are you when men shall revile you, {& persecute you} and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake

Rejoice and be exceeding glad for great is your reward in heaven *for so persecuted they* the prophets who were before you" In the above I am quoting from the Sermon on the Mount: that was what got William Penn into trouble and caused him to be persecuted for righteousness sake. He did not believe in killing, for preaching a sermon in the open street, taking for his text Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy." he was arrested and thrown into prison on the charge of "*Preaching to an unlawful seditious and riotous assembly brought together by force and arms*" But thanks be unto God that giveth the victory he won out at last: and the Toleration Act followed. "Blind unbelief is sure to err,"

Sincerely your friend
Genevieve Bennett Clark
(Mrs Champ Clark)[4]
Bowling Green Missouri

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. A letter from Emerin Campbell of New York City to Theodore Debs, dated March 15, 1921, is in InTI, Debs Collection.

2. Elizabeth Gardiner Evans (1856-1937) was in her long career active in a wide variety of liberal causes, particularly those involving the rights of labor. She campaigned for Debs in the 1920 presidential election and was one of the most persistent advocates of the cause of Sacco and Vanzetti during the 1920s. *New York Times*, December 13, 1937.

3. The *New Day* (March 19, 1921) described Mrs. Clark as "a brave woman" and told about her meeting with Harding on March 3, 1921. Harding had listened to her plea for Debs's release and "replied that the matter would receive his earliest attention."

4. Champ Clark (1850-1921) was a Democratic congressman from Missouri from 1897 until his death, a leading contender for the party's presidential nomination in 1912, and Speaker of the House from 1911 to 1921. At his meeting with Mrs. Clark on March 3, 1921, Harding was paying his respects to Clark, who died on March 2.

EVD to Otto Branstetter

March 28, [1921]
Atlanta, Georgia

My dear Otto,

The approaching "demonstration" at Washington[1] is going to fare, I fear, exactly as I forecasted it. There is going to be division and dissension that in turn will breed indifference or disgust, and the affair will be nothing compared to what it should be, and its influence for good perhaps negligible or of a questionable nature. I hope I am mistaken, but it looks that way to me now. Of course I would not say a word to discourage anyone but the indications do not seem flattering to me at all. I felt it from the time the administration announced its policy to give prompt attention to our cases, or at least to my case. We should have deferred if only from motives of expediency. You remember that I advised postponement not only of picketing but of the Washington demonstration. You agreed to the former but objected to the latter. I then suggested postponement of the demonstration at the Capitol to May 1st. You objected to that also and insisted that it must take place as scheduled and that it would be a tremendous success. I hope so! But I do not believe it. There may be a good meeting but I fear there will be no enthusiastic outpouring, no impressive parades or overwhelming demonstration.

I wished temporary postponement, as you remember, with a clear statement to the public saying that we would not attempt to coerce the new administration before it had a chance to act, but that we proposed to give it ample time to act of its own volition, thus placing ourselves in an attitude of fair play and thereby appealing to the public sense of justice and decency; if however, the administration failed to act within a reasonable time, then we proposed to turn loose the pickets, organize demonstrations and resort to all the means in our power to force the administration to set the war prisoners free.

This was what I believe should have been our policy and I so stated it, in substance, to you when you were here. It is not made quite clear nor complete in the Bulletin Service.[2]

I am being urged to be the speaker of the day at Washington on the 13th, if released. This will be impossible. I fully appreciate the honor intended, but am obliged to decline. I shall not be able, even if released, to speak at Washington on April 13th. There are personal reasons. I shall first require physical attention, and I can make no engagements until thereafter.

With all my heart I wish success, and what little I can do to assure it or help it along will gladly be done.

My love to you, dear Otto and to dear Comrade Winnie and the two sweet daughters I hope soon to see. And my loving remembrances to all the faithful comrades at headquarters.

March 28th

[EVD note to Theodore Debs]

Please have this typed and a type-written copy sent to Otto. Please make carbon copy and place in my office files.

Please go over it first and make any changes or corrections that you may think necessary.

AL, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. The demonstration by some 200 people in Washington on April 13, 1921, the second anniversary of Debs's imprisonment, was joined by the Socialist party, the Political Amnesty Committee, the American Civil Liberties Union, the AFL, and some other groups, who "paid calls" on President Harding, Vice-President Coolidge, and Attorney General Daugherty. In its coverage of the demonstration, the *New York Times*, April 14, 1921, reported that "President Harding contemplated no decision that would proclaim a general amnesty before a technical peace with the Central Powers has been brought about." Having rejected the Treaty of Versailles, the United States was "technically" still at war with Germany. In July 1921, Congress, in a joint resolution, declared World War I at an end and soon thereafter separate peace treaties were signed with Germany, Austria, and Hungary.

2. The Socialist Party Bulletin Service provided news stories and other materials to the labor and socialist press.

Marguerite Prevey to EVD

April 2, 1921
[Akron, Ohio]

Dear Comrade Eugene;

Each day seems to us here to be Oh so long. Waiting, just waiting, and watching the newspapers, looking for the headlines that tell us you are on your way home, how the dear folks at home must feel as the days go by so slowly, but the glad day will come soon, I feel sure of that and you will come back to us Victorious, what a joyful day that will be for your comrades, all over the World, if you could see the tears that fill the eyes of your comrades, strong men & women,

when your name is mentioned, you would understand how keenly they feel about your imprisonment.

The two long dreary years of your confinement will never be erased from our memory, your wonderful courage & your loyalty & devotion to your ideals, made it possible for you to come thru without a flicker.

I deeply appreciate the kindness you have discovered in the hearts of many of those with whom you have been associated, it proves from our contention that the tendency in human Nature is to be kind rather than vicious, with opportunity to freely express itself mankind will express the spirit of kindness and fair play, rather than antagonisms.

"Papoose" is out with Emma in our new car, he said I should tell "Big Chief" he was all ready to serve as Chauffer for all Visitors to "Terry Hut" that he hoped he would be honored by serving for "Big Chief" in the near future.

Party Matters are growing more interesting constantly. It will take you a week or two to catch up with the Changes that have taken place in two years. I hope you will take time to get acquainted with things as they are, from original sources, rather than accepting the say so of some representative of Organizations, I warn you especially to investigate for yourself. You will understand I'm sure.

Petitions[1] are on their way to Washington from all over the Country, I addressed 1000 Envelopes myself to Central Labor Bodies in U.S. & Canada.

Be of Good Cheer Dear Comrade all will come out O.K.

Lovingly,
M. Prevey

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. The *New Day* and other papers, including the *Terre Haute Post,* printed petition forms, requiring only a signature and demanding Debs's release, in issues throughout February and March 1921. The *Terre Haute Post,* a nonsocialist paper, accompanied the printed petitions with statements calling for amnesty by Basil Manly, Robert LaFollette, Alice Paul, and others as part of its campaign. On March 9, 1921, the paper mailed petitions with 21,430 signatures to President Harding. *Terre Haute Post,* March 10, 1921. Later in the year the mayor of Terre Haute, Charles R. Hunter, sent a letter to Harding "on behalf of Eugene V. Debs, a man we honor and love," asking Harding "to liberate Gene Debs." *Miami Valley Socialist,* December 16, 1921.

Broadus Mitchell[1] to EVD

April 4, 1921
Baltimore, Maryland

My dear Mr. Debs:

I am enclosing, just as returned to me, a letter which I mailed to you February 15th, together with a letter of the First Assistant Post Master General, which is self-explanatory.

With best wishes, I am

Cordially yours,
Broadus Mitchell

[February 15 letter from Broadus Mitchell to EVD]

My dear Mr. Debs:

I am sure that, especially since President Wilson's refusal to pardon you, you have gotten many letters from friends you do not know. You will not get one sent with more good wishes than this of mine.

In the face of your clear exposition of the causes of social wrongs, your high-minded devotion to the people, your kindliness in everything, your bravery in resolute suffering under terrible personal injustice, I am without words beyond, for my part, a very grateful acknowledgment. I am as sorry for the selfishness and blindness of my country as I am confident of the ultimate triumph of the ideas and purposes for which you are mistreated.

Every man with a social conscience and an historical sense ought to express his indebtedness to your courage. But surely words are not enough. What you most wish, I suspect, besides freedom ungrudgingly given, is youth and its new strength. You must find pleasure in every assurance that followers will "carry on." Perhaps it is not unnatural for me to want you to know that I am one of those eager to use his youth and strength to impress your example.

Very respectfully and cordially yours,
Broadus Mitchell
John Hopkins University

[J. C. Koons[2] to Broadus Mitchell]

Sir: March 31, 1921

In answer to your letter of the 21st instant, which the Postmaster General has referred to me, I have to state that this Bureau has been advised by the Superintendent of Prisons, Department of Justice, that in returning to the Atlanta post office certain mail addressed to Eugene V. Debs, the Chief Clerk of the Federal prison at Atlanta was acting under orders from Washington, the writing privilege of this prisoner

having been suspended by the Department of Justice. Writing privileges have been restored to the prisoner[3] and the sealed letter which was mailed by you on February 15th, and returned evidently because of the suspension order referred to, is returned to you in order that if you now desire to have it delivered to Mr. Debs, you may remail it under new cover with new postage prepaid.

Respectfully,
J. C. Koons
First Assistant Postmaster General

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Broadus Mitchell (1892-1988) received his Ph.D. in history from Johns Hopkins University in 1918. His many books, including *The Rise of the Cotton Mills in the South* (1921), *American Economic History* (1947), and *Alexander Hamilton* (1976), and articles established his reputation as a leading American economic historian and biographer.

2. John Cornelius Koons (1873-1937) served as first assistant postmaster general in the Wilson administration from 1916 to 1921. He organized the government's control of telephone and telegraph communications in World War I.

3. Warden Zerbst notified the Department of Justice on March 3, 1921, that "the order suspending the mail and visiting privileges of Eugene V. Debs . . . are hereby rescinded and the privileges restored." National Archives, Records of the Department of Justice, Record Group 60, 77175.

Otto Branstetter to EVD

April 4, 1921
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Comrade Debs:

Theodore has just forwarded me your recent communication[1] regarding the Amnesty campaign and I am willing to admit that the number of our petitions and the size of our delegations will not be what we would have liked to have them. This, however, is due to a weakness within our own organization and something that could not be remedied by a postponement or delay. As I told you when I was in Atlanta, any postponement of the demonstration means the abandonment of the idea entirely. If we cannot generate enough enthusiasm and make it a success at the present time, we cannot do so later with the added handicap of the present failure and the resulting discouragement.[2]

The whole plan of campaign is being actively fought by some individuals and maliciously sabotaged by others. On the one hand, we have Mr. Gompers with his intense hatred of the Socialist move-

ment, and his personal antagonism to yourself and other prominent Socialists on account of the criticisms that have been directed against him so frequently in the past. With Gompers in this attitude is, of course, Mrs. Robbins and her amnesty committee. They are, to the best of their ability, undermining every move we make and actively working to prevent our securing support or co-operation.[3]

You seem to be under the impression that their opposition is due to a disagreement as to the details of our campaign. I can assure you that objections to this or that detail, such as the picketing, were urged only as an excuse for not co-operating and for opposing our efforts. We have made every effort to secure the co-operation of Mrs. Robbins[4] and have made every possible concession to secure her co-operation, only to be met by a new objection and further delay. In the meantime, as we know positively, she is actively working against our efforts not only in persuading organizations and individuals not to co-operate, but also in an attempt to dissuade them after they have commenced working with us. This is what we are up against so far as the old guard of the A.F. of L. is concerned.

On the other hand, we have the Communist, the Communist Labor and anarchist groups, with a number of I.W.Ws actively opposing our efforts because they object to "asking or accepting amnesty from a capitalist government" and are waiting for the social revolution to free our political prisoners. The result of their "revolutionary tactics" is the same as usual. That is, they take the same position that Mr. Gompers and Wall Street takes. Wall Street is opposed to our Amnesty Campaign; Mr. Gompers is opposed to our Amnesty campaign; the Communists are opposed to our Amnesty campaign, and each of them are working in their own way to block all our efforts and make the campaign a failure.

This, however, is not the greatest opposition we have or the most discouraging feature of the work. If we had in the Socialist party a united militant group depending upon themselves and our organization to make our efforts successful, we would be able to do big things despite the opposition of our natural enemies. Unfortunately, however, our own people are largely indifferent and are lukewarm in their support of the campaign, while a considerable element of them are antagonistic to the whole campaign. These misguided comrades have fallen for Mrs. Robbins' campaign of sabotage and are convinced that amnesty is to be had immediately thru the efforts of Mrs. Robbins, Mr. Gompers or Norman Hapgood or some other influential personage not connected with the Socialist Party, if the Socialist Party will be absolutely quiet and make no effort for amnesty. I do not under-

stand how comrades can be obsessed with the idea that a Republican administration is going to be particularly influenced by democratic politicians. Mr. Gompers has for years been using all of his influence in support of the Democratic party and we know how much influence he had for amnesty with the last administration. If he was unable to secure amnesty from Mr. Wilson, whom he had served most faithfully and servilely what chance has he for securing amnesty from Mr. Harding, whom he has opposed.

As for Mr. Hapgood, he is very much in earnest in his work for amnesty, and is a very capable newspaper writer. It must be remembered, however, that he is writing for the Hearst publications and as such, will have no particular personal influence with the Republican administration. The same can be said for other liberals on whom some of our comrades are counting, to influence the administration.

It appears to me that the administration's position on amnesty will be determined very largely by questions of political expediency. To suppose that the Republican Party is going to determine its policy on the advice of Democrats is absurd. The Socialist Party is the only political organization with which I am familiar that has so little practical political sense and so little of the organization spirit as to allow its policies to be determined by its enemies. I do not mean that there is no chance of amnesty from the present administration. In fact, I think there is a very good chance. I am convinced, however, that the best way to secure it is for the Socialist Party and other radical groups to stand on their own bottoms, make their own fight in their own way, and not depend upon friendly enemies to get results for them.

Both President Harding and Attorney General Daugherty have granted interviews to our committees on April 13th. To the extent that they can be influenced by such interviews, I am satisfied that delegations from the organizations having members amongst the political prisoners will be most influential.

The war hysteria is dying out and to some extent we are getting back the spirit of fair play and some respect for the rights of minorities and admiration for the courage of militant minorities who stand unflinchingly by their convictions. Unless the administration has regained its sense of fair play and respect for good fighters, there is no hope of amnesty. To the extent that they have regained some of this spirit, nothing can be more effective than radical groups frankly and fearlessly setting forth their viewpoints and their arguments for the release of their imprisoned comrades.

I am thinking now of the effect upon Harding as an individual and not as a politician. I think the question will be decided in a Cabinet meeting or in a council of the Republican chiefs as a matter of party

policy. Their decision, however, will of course be determined by the attitude which the individual members take. I believe that Mr. Harding would be influenced more favorably from a human standpoint, from a fair play standpoint, from an American standpoint, by an intelligent committee of Socialists asking the release of their comrades, than he would be by a like committee of Democrats or Republicans.

I may be mistaken about the effect of such policies upon Mr. Harding, but I am not mistaken upon its effect upon our own membership and upon our own organization. The party is in a weaker and more disorganized condition than at any time in its history. We are entirely without courage or self-reliance. We are doubtful of ourselves and our own ability. We are seeking help and assistance from every possible source and depending entirely upon other people and other organizations to do the work which we ought to be doing ourselves.

This condition was brought about largely as a result of the war terrorization when we formed People's Councils, the American Freedom Foundation[5] and a dozen different defense committees to do the work which the party felt it could not do under the existing circumstances as a Socialist Party organization. This policy may have been necessary and justifiable at the time, but the result has been disastrous to the party organization. Nobody has any faith in the Party, nobody wants to do anything through the Party. Every time there is some work to be done which the Party should do, we find it necessary to try to organize a new side-line organization for the purpose of doing it. The result is that the energies of our members are dissipated in a dozen different organizations and the Party is correspondingly weakened. I am satisfied that the disintegration in the Party will continue until what is left of us decide that we are not ashamed of being Socialists or belonging to the Socialist Party; until we decide that when we are going to work for defense funds, for strike benefits, for Russian medical relief, for amnesty, or for any other purpose, that we are going to do it as Socialists and through the Socialist Party organization.

The Party used to do things as a Party, and when we did, we had a successful growing organization and a militant aggressive spirit amongst our membership. Until we adopt the same tactics, we will never get that spirit back and we will never make any progress as an organization. If the policies of the Socialist Party are to be determined by Mr. Gompers or Mr. Hapgood, by Senator France or Senator Watson,[6] or by any other than Socialists interested in the success of the Socialist Party, we might as well go out of business. Any Socialist would think it absurd to suppose that the Republican National Committee should make its plans in accord with the wishes of Democrats or Socialists, or that the Democratic Committee would map out its

campaign as directed by the republicans or Non-Partisan Leaguers, but by some strange process of reasoning, they think it is the part of wisdom and political strategy for the Socialist Party to act upon the advice and instructions of Democrats and Republicans.

The above does not have a direct bearing on the Amnesty matter alone, but on all of our party activities. I have been feeling this for months and realizing more fully all the time that it is one of the disintegrating tendencies that are killing our organization. Frankly, I do not know whether we can stop this tendency and rebuild the party with the old spirit and enthusiasm or whether we will go to pieces completely and leave the work to a new and more militant organization with more confidence in themselves and the righteousness of their cause.

As applying directly to the Amnesty campaign, I am satisfied that we can do nothing else than proceed with our plans to the best of our ability. If our demonstration is a failure or our petition is a disappointment, it will be due to the extreme weakness of our organization and it would not be more successful if it had been postponed a few weeks or some detail had been different.

I am not quite sure from your last letter just what your wishes are in this matter. You make it quite clear that you think we are making a mistake, but you do not make any definite suggestions either as to modifying our plans or abandoning our efforts altogether. However, you seem to infer that we could make a larger success of it if we co-operated more closely with Mrs. Robbins and other groups. I wish I could make you understand how earnestly we have endeavored to co-operate with these people and how futile all our efforts have been.

The American Civil Liberties Union,[7] the I.W.W. General Defense Committee, the Inter-Collegiate Socialist Society,[8] Norman Thomas, Rev. John Haynes Holmes and other groups and individuals *not opposed to the principles of Socialism* are co-operating with us and doing everything in their power to make our campaign a success. A large number of liberals who are not in sympathy with Socialist principles are also giving us their assistance for the sake of amnesty. It is, however, apparently asking too much of Mr. Gompers, with his life-long antagonism to the Socialist movement, to co-operate with us in any manner or to expect from him anything but the most bitter antagonism.

I do not know how much information you have on this matter, or how thoroughly you are able to understand the situation. The facts of the matter, however, are these. Senator France, Norman Hapgood and others who are interested in amnesty from the standpoint of justice and Americanism, are willing to work for amnesty in their own

way, but will have nothing to do with the Socialist Party. A certain group of A.F. of L. leaders who care nothing for amnesty but have been forced to declare for it on account of the demand from their own membership, will make a pretense at working for amnesty in their own way, but will have absolutely nothing to do with the Socialist Party.

Under these circumstances, the Socialist Party can do either of two things. It can leave the Amnesty agitation entirely to these two groups and do nothing in behalf of our imprisoned comrades, or it can make the best campaign it is able with such radical and liberal support as it is able to secure.

In my mind there can be no question as to our choice. We cannot and we dare not choose to sit down and fold our hands and say that we are not interested in the matter of amnesty because our friends in the A.F. of L. and in the Democratic and Republican parties are going to see that amnesty is granted. This policy is unthinkable. There is only one other course open to us and we are following that course to the best of our ability.

I wish you to understand, Comrade Debs, how deeply concerned I am over your apparent disapproval, but how absolutely impossible it seems for us to do otherwise than we are doing. I hope to be able to come down and see you regarding this matter within the next few days, though I am not sure that I can come or that I would be allowed to see you if I did come. I am seriously considering making the attempt, however, and in case I do so, I will be there within a day or two after you receive this communication.

I wish, however, that you would not delay replying on the chance that I may come to Atlanta, but that you will write frankly and as fully as you can to me, through Theodore, immediately.

With all good wishes, I am

Fraternally yours,
Otto Branstetter,
Executive Secretary.

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. See EVD to Branstetter, March 28, 1921.

2. The Socialist party delegation's role in the amnesty demonstration in Washington on April 13, 1921, is described in some detail in "Amnesty Day in Washington" (*Socialist World*, April 15, 1921).

3. The friction between the Socialist party and AFL amnesty groups was reflected in a *New Day* article, August 6, 1921, that claimed that "Mr. Gompers did not go to see the president with the rabble of Socialists. No, he went alone. It looked bigger and he could say his say 'for Debs' in the president's ear. We do not say he knocked Debs . . . but he admitted he ran down the Socialists so we can guess the rest."

4. Branstetter's reference to Mrs. Robbins throughout this letter is to Lucy Robins, who was, as noted, heading up the AFL's amnesty work.

5. A coalition of various groups interested in amnesty, the American Freedom Foundation was organized at Socialist party headquarters in Chicago in February 1920. It soon dissolved as a result of strategic and tactical differences among its components. *Socialist World,* June 1922.

6. In "Tom Watson Joins in Appeal's Fight to Save Debs" (*Appeal,* March 5, 1921), Watson wrote, "I will do everything in my power to get Debs out of jail."

7. As noted, the American Civil Liberties Union was founded in 1920 as a successor organization to the National Civil Liberties Bureau to defend constitutional freedoms, especially those related to First Amendment rights.

8. As noted, the Intercollegiate Socialist Society was organized in 1905 by, among others, Jack London and Upton Sinclair to promote interest in socialism among college men and women. For sixteen years the group carried on its work until 1921, when it was re-organized as the League for Industrial Democracy.

EVD to Theodore Debs

April 7, [1921]
[Atlanta, Georgia]

Theo.

This is the sacred old French cradle-song our dear "Daisy" used to rock us to sleep with—"Au Clair de La Lune, et. pour let mort de Deiu." Mary will remember it. I have never before seen it in print,[1] but it still echoes sweetly in my memory as our adored "Daisy" sang it soft and low as she wooed us into shadowy Dreamland.

AL, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. In Max Walter and Anna Woods Ballard, *French Songs* (Chicago, 1916), the last line of "Au Clair de la Lune" is "Pour l'amour de Dieu."

Hattie Norris to EVD

April 8, 1921
West Monroe, Louisiana

My Dearest Friend,

I feel as if I had just blown from an unknown land this morning. All the teachers have gone to a teacher's meeting and will not be back until Monday. Not all, but two have remained for fear that we might get two days of rest. Our study periods have been changed so

that we dont know beginning from the ending. A Mr Prop Brown has just kept the tenth grade study period, and believe me, he sure is some high tempered, red faced, know-nothing sort of a human.

Listen now! for I have something very import to tell you. It appears in every day *life*.

About the first of school a new girl entered our class. She was not welcome at all by the class, all the girls called [her] tackey and silly. Did you ever hear of those two words before? If you have ever heard two weak minded girl talk, I know you have. This is what I am going to tell you: I felt very sorrow for this poor unfortunate girl and did every thing in my power to make her feel welcome. She is a real bright child but dont dress as most of them do, but what do you think happened to her good luck? Her father has recieved a Million dollars for some oil leases, two days ago. I know you can guess what next happens! Why! These very girls who talked about her most are now her best friends.

I have shed tears for you dear Comrade in prison, but of course I know it is no use. If Wilson only knew how my heart feels toward him for being so cruel to you but he has no heart and can not understand. I pity him, and may God bless him!

I dream of you at night. I see you out in the open breeze delivering messages to the people. I shake your loving hands as you leave us, and can see in those tender eyes a look of everlasting love, which seems to say, I am your true friend little children, fear not, for I shall always be with you.

I know that I have not been allowed to send my love and best wishes, but you have them just the same. I hope you enjoyed your trip to Washington.[1]

May this letter not find you behind those naughty bars, but at your loving Sweet home.

With all kind of good wishes and my best love for you and your Comrades,

Hattie Norris
Box 146

[EVD note to Theodore Debs]

Please save this! It is a child's heart. You will hear it beat in tender, tearful, Mothering love for all that breathes.

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. On March 24-25, 1921, Debs was permitted to travel by train to Washington, D.C., to confer with Attorney General Daugherty and then return to the prison in Atlanta. His unguarded trip was hailed in the socialist press as a victory for the amnesty movement (*New Day*, April 2, 1921) and denounced in the nonsocialist press

as "discrimination in favor of a criminal duly convicted by constituted authorities." *Atlanta Georgian*, March 25, 1921. The *New Day* said that Debs had traveled "as silently as a ghost," but news of the trip was published immediately and brought down on Harding and Daugherty a flood of protests. On his return to Atlanta, Debs was met by a crowd of reporters, whose questions concerning the nature and purpose of his trip he refused to answer; motion-picture photographers; and Warden Zerbst, who drove Debs back to the prison. National Archives, Records of the Department of Justice, Record Group 60, File 77175.

Theodore Debs to Otto Branstetter

April 9, 1921
Terre Haute, Indiana

Dear Comrade Branstetter:—

I received a note from Gene in which he asked me to write you the following in answer to yours of April 4th.:

> "Please say that I have read Comrade Branstetter's letter carefully and that he seems to think I meant to discourage the party's amnesty program. Not so! It is too late for any change. There is but one thing to do and that is to push it with all possible vigor and make as successful a showing as can be made. In writing I only wished my own individual position understood. I admitted that I might be mistaken. But I am convinced that a postponement such as I suggested would have been the wiser plan and had the better effect on the party. Why? Because the Harding administration from the day of its inauguration showed a decent disposition toward the political prisoners. Harding himself was on record as favoring amnesty,[1] and we had every reason to believe that action, one way or the other, would be taken with the least possible delay. Never mind about their motives in showing a fair disposition toward amnesty. We are not concerned with that. We know that whatever they may do to favor us will not be done because they love us personally; but if they think it politically expedient to release our people, so much the better for us, our party, and our cause. There was the opportunity to make a legitimate play for public sentiment, a master stroke as I saw it, by showing a disposition to meet the administration half way by postponing the proposed demonstration (and remember it was the *demonstration* that was planned and what its purpose was in connection with the rest of the program!) pending the action of the administration. The average person said: 'Harding and Daugherty show a fair spirit; they are going to do the right

thing; give them a chance!' And to that sentiment we would have made effective appeal if we had said substantially, 'Sure thing! we'll meet the administration half way! They show a disposition to act of their own initiative and they shall have the chance, so far as we are concerned. To this end we have called off our demonstration and postponed our program. If the action taken is favorable and prisoners of war are released as they should be, it will be all the better and there will be no necessity for any demonstration. If, however, we are again denied and this great American republic continues to stand before the world as the only nation engaged in the war that keeps its political prisoners in its dungeons two years and a half after the war is over, then we propose to promptly revive our program upon an even larger and more aggressive scale, and we shall organize a nation-wide demonstration, resort to picketing, and appeal to all the militant, liberty-loving elements in the land to aid us in arousing the nation to a sense of its position before the civilized world, and compel amnesty and the release of all prisoners of war.' This, briefly sketched, should, I think, have been our position. Such a statement would have made a powerful appeal to the sense of fair play of the common people. We would not have had long to wait. If the administration granted amnesty the victory would have been won and the party given its full share of credit. If amnesty or release was refused, that in itself would arouse the people, and provoke widespread indignation and resentment, and then a militant program of demonstration, picketing etc. would have been in order and the people would be ripe and ready for it and again the party would be the winner, because such a program would make a far stronger appeal for support after being turned down than before giving the administration a chance.

It would have been sound strategy to postpone (with a clear, ringing statement of the reasons for doing so and the conditions clearly stipulated) if on no other ground.

In the event of favorable action by the President and the release of our comrades and other class war prisoners, I should have favored the National Executive Committee at once calling for a nation wide ratification of the amnesty and liberation of prisoners, and revival of the constitutional right of free speech, free press, and free assemblage, and those ratification meetings would have rallied the people by the hundreds of thousands all over the country and given us the very opportunity for propaganda on a large scale so sorely needed by our party organization.

But that is in the past and now there is only one thing to do and that is to push the program and make all out of it possible.

As to the disintegration of the party, I have my own ideas as to that, but cannot discuss the question here.

Now as to the friction and bitter feeling between the party and Mrs. Robins' Committee, I never could understand the slightest reason for it. There should have been perfect co-operation from the start. But the right spirit was lacking and through mutual intolerance small differences at the beginning developed irreconcilable hostility and hatred to the discredit and disadvantage of both. I am not accusing anyone in this connection, mistakes having been made on both sides.

With the rest of the letter I am in full agreement, and I certainly appreciate the fine, comradely spirit in which my opinion has been met. As already said, it was only my opinion but I had reason for wishing my position clearly understood in the light of possible subsequent developments.

I hope Comrade Branstetter will come to Atlanta as I should be very happy to see him again, although I regret his having to make so long a journey at a time when he is so fully occupied with other affairs. Please say that I thank him for having written me so fully and frankly and that I send love and hearty greetings to him and Mrs. Branstetter and all the comrades at the national office."

Yours fraternally,
Theodore Debs

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. In "Debs Pardon Indicated" (*New Day*, March 26, 1921), Harding was described as having "repeatedly expressed the ambition to create an era of good feeling among all groups and classes in the country" and as considering "the presence of the Socialist standard-bearer in the federal penitentiary at Atlanta . . . one of the chief obstacles to that achievement."

Mabel Dunlap Curry to EVD

April 11, 1921
[Terre Haute, Indiana]

My very dear Comrade,

I overlooked the fact that Wed. would be an anniversary![1] I can say with all the sincerity of my heart that *never* did a mortal pay more bravely nor more uncomplainingly for his ideals than you have done. The last years have been long and tragic for us all but they have proven your stature as a *man* and your integrity as a humanitarian!

Our love and admiration have grown with the passing days, and now your place in our hearts is unique in its security and the reverence in which we hold your ideals.

God bless and keep you dear Gene and bring you back to us very soon! May this little reminder of a sad sad day two years ago find your face turned toward home and your heart filled with hope and good cheer. You will find nothing but devotion here and the warmest hands and hearts ready to receive you. My family sends love and every good wish.

As ever yours
M. Curry.

ALS, InU, Lilly Library, Curry Papers.

1. Wednesday, April 13, 1921, was the second anniversary of Debs's imprisonment.

Hattie Norris to Theodore Debs

April 18, 1921
West Monroe, Louisiana

My Dear Friend,

It is hard and sad to think off, but we are going to have a close struggle with these American Leagues.[1] Wall Street is paying men and woman to destroy every hope of real democracy in America, if they possible can.

A man, called by the name of Mr Whitman spoke to the high School pupils last Wensday morning. He is one of these so called one hundred per cent Americans, and belive me all the pupils sure did take to his little speech, "We want you to remain slaves for us."

Just think we will have to suffer through all this, that is until the people can see that this one hundred per cent American is nothing but to keep them in slavery.

I guess you know how I felt while this man was speaking. All the pupils would turn around look at me laughing, but I didn't care for that at all. I pited them for being so igorant, and deep down in my heart I was saying: "You have brought it all upon your selves; each day you are plunging deep into slavery, but soon you shall see and know."

I wrote Eugene about eight days ago, but dont know if he got my

letter or not. When you write him—(if he isn't out of that naughty old prison) Send my love and best wishes to him.

Your Friend,
Hattie Norris

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. American Legion. The socialist press repeatedly emphasized the ties between the Legion and conservative business interests. See, e.g., "Legion in Limelight," *New Day,* August 27, 1921, in which the charge was made that "a small group of wealthy men provided the funds for floating the legion as an organization" and provided the $9,000 annual rent for the Legion's headquarters in Indianapolis.

Otto Branstetter to EVD

April 21, 1921
[Chicago, Illinois]

Dear Comrade Debs:

You have no doubt seen the press stories of our amnesty day at Washington which we consider quite successful in all respects[1]—both in the reception we received and the impression which we apparently made. I am enclosing copy of the press service which has been sent to you in the regular routine but which you may not have received—also copy of a circular letter going out to all delegates.

Mrs. Branstetter is remaining in Washington for several weeks, continuing the work until Mrs. Blatch[2] is able to return.

Daugherty kept our committee there two hours discussing various phases of the question and gave the committee to understand that he did not favor a general amnesty, but that the cases would be taken up individually and that the Department was disposed to be lenient, "with a growing leniency."

Our petitions are still coming in with every mail and Mrs. Branstetter is delivering them personally to the proper Congressmen. This gives her an excuse for calling on the congressmen and an opportunity of discussing the proposition with them personally. As the petitions are coming from every State and every section, it means that we will personally interview every member of Congress if we can raise money enough to finance the Washington committee. The office is desperately hard up for funds as the general unemployment has cut off the main source of our revenue. We will, however, maintain the Washington committee until the comrades are released if we abandon all other activities.

I wish you would send, through Theodore, a little note of appreciation to Harriot Stanton Blatch, 106 E. 52 St., New York City and Abraham Tuvim,[3] 31 Union Sq., New York City, N.Y. Comrade Blatch, as you know, was in charge of the headquarters in Washington and Comrade Tuvim worked both in Washington and New York attending to a lot of outside work that Mrs. Blatch could not well handle. Necessarily I could not attend to the details of the Washington arrangements from headquarters and the success of the affair was due entirely to the efforts and ability of Comrades Blatch and Tuvim. I am sure they would highly prize a word of appreciation from you and feel that they are entitled to this reward.

With all good wishes, I am

Fraternally yours,
[Otto Branstetter]
Executive Secretary.

TLc, IN.

1. In "Amnesty Day In Washington" (*Socialist World*, April 15, 1921), it was claimed that "the petitions [presented to Harding] contained over 300,000 individual signatures and the endorsement of over 700 organizations with a membership of more than three million."

2. Harriot Stanton Blatch, a director of the Political Amnesty Committee, who addressed the delegates at the Washington demonstration. *New Day*, April 16, 1921.

3. Abraham Tuvim (1895-1958) was a publicist and organizer for the United Hebrew Trades Union in New York and a leader of the Socialist party's amnesty committee in New York City. An exchange of letters between Theodore Debs and Tuvim, May 20 and 25, 1921, sheds considerable light on the friction among the various groups seeking amnesty for Debs and other prisoners. InTI, Debs Collection.

EVD to Theodore Debs

April 26, [1921]
[Atlanta, Georgia]

My dear Theo.,

You will sadly miss Mabel and her help, I am sure, but I am very glad she is taking her trip for she needs a rest and the change and the visit with her daughters and friends will do her good and she will return rested and refreshed.

This is Confederate Memorial Day[1] in the South and we are having a half holiday here at the prison. The shops are closed down and the boys are out in the ball park. I am always glad when they have a chance to enjoy the fresh air and the sunshine—it is quite probable

that my case will now be decided soon and I anticipate favorable action, though prepared for anything. It is not improbable that I may be with you in the next week or two, and we will soon be booked up again and having things going our way.

I will send you the mail each Tuesday and Saturday so you will get it each Monday and Thursday unless there should be delay in transit. In case of anything important I will send you an extra packet. The packet containing this should reach you on Monday.

AL, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Confederate Memorial Day was observed on April 26 in Florida and Georgia, on other dates elsewhere among the former states of the Confederacy.

"A Producer" to EVD

April 30, 1921
Portland, Oregon

Dear Gene—

We working people of Oregon hope that the guards throw the whip into you every day. You aren't a toiler. You never produced anything. You tried to prolong war so that 1000000's of the US boys would be slaughtered.

We hope you'll never come out of the jug alive.

A. Producer

You are a *Parasyte*

We hope the guards will lash you on the bareback.

AL, Debs Home, EVD Foundation.

David H. Clark[1] to Theodore Debs

April 30, 1921
Atlanta, Georgia

Dear Comrade:

The Metropolitan Opera company, of which Caruso is a member has been here all this week.[2] This office has been visited almost daily by groups of those scintillating, rythmic beautis who were hunting up Castleton that he might help them, get in to see Gene. It was so sweet

to hear them call us "comrades" and tell us that they belonged to Brooklyn Local, & c.

One dear girl comrade tried with tears in her eyes to get the warden to let her say just Hello to Gene, but as Gene said on the train from Washington, The Damned bow-legged brute, glorified in his satanic authority, and refused that pure-hearted girl comrade, even a chance of shaking Gene's hand.

She is leaving tonight with the Opera for NEW YORK, but before she left, she wrote Gene a letter telling of her terrible disappointment in not seeing him, and now comrade I ask you, as I explained to her that you would answer instead of Gene, if the censor cuts out her letter, please write her a good comforting letter and convey Gene's love to her. The address is as follows:

"Miss Anna Brookstaber,[3] 366 Broadway, Astoria, Long Island, N.Y."

She is {in} touch with many of the other disappointed girl comrades and a word from you as per Gene, will thrill them.

With best wishes to you all, I am
David H. Clark.
313 Healey Bldg.,
Atlanta Ga.

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. David H. Clark was an Atlanta businessman, the president of the Southern Textile Improvement Company. He visited Debs regularly in prison and wrote accounts of his visits in a series for the *Appeal to Reason*, January 1, 1921. In an article in the *Appeal*, March 19, 1921, Clark identified himself as one of the leaders of "the Debs Amnesty Lobby" in Washington, D.C.

2. The Metropolitan Opera Company performed in Atlanta April 25-30, 1921. Enrico Caruso (1873-1921) was the internationally renowned tenor in the company. Quaintance Eaton, *Opera Caravan Adventures of the Metropolitan on Tour 1883-1956* (New York, 1957), 285-86.

3. In Anna Bookstaber's letter to Debs, dated April 30, 1921, she identified herself as "a member of the Metropolitan Opera Company" who had "tried very hard to see you, but prison regulations forbid." She was, she said, "a Brooklyn Y.P.S.L. and also a party member." InTI, Debs Collection.

EVD to Mabel Dunlap Curry

May 2, [1921]
[Atlanta, Georgia]

Most precious Love,

It is not yet time for us, but the day is on the way, and we have to be patient yet awhile. It seems very hard at times, almost unen-

durable, and it is then we have to assert our mastery over self to escape madness and despair. My heart is with you this wonderful May morning and I can but wish I might "say it to you in flowers." You grow more beautiful and more precious to me with the passing days. The separation in miles can not for a moment cause severance in spirit. You are ever near me and your presence inspires, sustains and exalts me. I could never think of any evil thing with the thought of you in my mind and heart. You are so sweet and soulful, so beautiful and radiant that

> "Wherever you stay, wherever you go,
> The beautiful palms of Allah grow."

Need I say, my precious little Woman, that my love, my adoration, my reverence for you grow greater day by day, and that my life has been made infinitely richer since God gave you your place in my soul's dominion! I see you this morning as you bend above your revered Father to smoothe his pillow and kiss his brow in tenderest devotion and ministration, like the daughter of Lear, Mothering the venerable Father who Mothered you in your babyhood and childhood days, and my heart is touched too deeply for words and I can only pay my humble tribute in silence with mist-covered eyes. God bless you and your dear Father and all your loved ones and grant fulfillment of your hearts' desire and your happiest dreams! How I wish I had you with me for an hour this morning, or a week, or even a minute! Just long enough to see your sweet face, look into your gentle eyes, hear your merry voice, and clasp you in my arms! It has been so very, very long and we have been so very patient. Why could not the fates relent in just the least? But I am to utter no complaining word for that would be in violation of our unwritten code. You have been my heroine, and how could I be weak and give way in the face of trial and be worthy of you and your great love—the love you have attested in tears of silent sacrifice and in circumstances only the truest heart and bravest soul could have withstood! How very many things I have to say to you, my loved one! It will take days and weeks and months, and then the half will not be told. I so love to tell you things. You listen with such tender sympathy and you respond with such perfect understanding and devotion. Beautiful woman! Radiant spirit! Wonderful soul! God made you for his own divine fulfillment and for a mighty love. All is well here. My physical condition is touching perfection and my spirit's wings have boundless scope. May this little message be greeted with glad eyes and a cheerful heart. Don't you hear me treading in your footsteps and whispering my love to you

many times each day? I hold you in my arms, my own precious Juno, and I love and bless you with all my heart

Yours in eternal devotion
Ura

Love is God and you and heaven and all there is!

ALS, InU, Lilly Library, Curry Papers.

[Otto Branstetter] to EVD

May 3, 1921
[Chicago, Illinois]

Dear Gene:

When I was there last you mentioned the fact that Lucy Robins denied having used Theodore's letter last Fall in an unfair manner. I am enclosing a copy of our press service issued at that time, which contains a copy of her telegram to you, Theodore's reply thereto, and the statement issued by her through the Publicity Department of the American Federation of Labor.

The essential point in the controversy is this—in her telegram to you she did not mention that the report, the authenticity of which she was questioning, was the Tucker interview[1] issued by the National Office, and neither you nor Theodore so understood it when your reply to her was made. However, in publishing Theodore's letter, she definitely states that it is in reply to a telegram from her questioning the authenticity "of a public statement issued by the Socialist National Headquarters in Chicago, on August 23rd, 1920, attacking President Samuel Gompers of the American Federation of Labor." This statment was the press service story of your interview with Tucker.[2] She says that your letter was in reply to her telegram questioning the authenticity of this particular document and that your letter was therefore a repudiation of it.

The misrepresentation is too apparent for contradiction and could not possibly have been other than deliberate and intentional. The documents speak for themselves and should be sufficient. However, this is an old controversy and I am much more vitally interested in recent happenings which are causing me much more concern.

I have been receiving reports for sometime both from New York, Washington, and Atlanta, to the effect that Mrs. Robins tells people in confidence that when she visits Atlanta, she takes you out of the prison in citizens' clothing and without guards. I do not know whether

that statement is true or not. I do not think it is; but I can conceive that it might possibly be true. What is very important, however, is that the statement should not be made—whether it be true or untrue. In case it is true, that is only the more reason why it should not be made and I am reluctant to call this matter to your attention, but I feel that it is of such importance that it should be reported and the circulation of such reports stopped at their source.[3]

As evidence of the character of the reports we have received, I quote the following from a letter from Comrade Abraham Tuvim:

> "Mrs. Blatch, Mrs. Robins, Miss Norton and I were in the headquarters in Washington one morning when we were supposed to adjust the difficulties which then existed, and Mrs. Robins gave us the following bit of information. I will quote in almost exact words because I was very much impressed by what she said and the manner in which she said it.
>
> " 'I have been down to see Gene and have always been received with open arms. The warden likes me very much and knows he can depend on me. Many a time has he permitted me to take Gene out, and once I was able to take Gene to a party which was given by some of the comrades and which he enjoyed very much. This was near the City, and I took him there by automobile and brought him back again.'
>
> "I think it was Mrs. Blatch who remarked that she did not think such a thing was possible, and Robins replied that it was not possible except in her case. I have a distinct recollection of having heard her say, 'The warden would not think of permitting anybody else to do it but myself.' "

This report of Tuvim's was verified by Mrs. Blatch and Miss Norton and now I am in receipt of a similar report from Comrade Castleton at Atlanta, in part as follows:

> "She is suffering nightmare hallucinations and is suspicious of everyone. I wearied of her tales when she began: 'If it weren't for the rain I would have taken Gene out tonight alone—without the warden. I would have dressed him up in a private citizen's clothes.' But Gene wouldn't have violated the prison rule. 'If I ask him to do it, he'll do anything,' she said with a self satisfied air of certainty. Can you beat it? Peddling this dope all over the country."

I consider the making of such statements as quoted absolutely criminal, whether they be true or untrue and I trust that you will do whatever may be done to prevent their repetition.

I am sending a copy of this to Theodore for his information and

for such action as he may deem it advisable to take. I think he should at least write to Mrs. Robins warning her of the immense harm which may be done by such statements and advising against them in the future. It is useless for me to take the matter up with her as in the present status of our diplomatic relations only additional bitterness and animosity would be created.

With best wishes, I am

Fraternally yours,
[Otto Branstetter]
Executive Secretary.

TLc, IN.

1. Irwin St. John Tucker's interview with Debs in prison on August 15, 1920, was widely reprinted in the socialist press (see *St. Louis Labor,* September 12, 1920).

2. In the Tucker interview, Debs referred to unnamed labor leaders as "self-perpetrating oligarchs that re-elect themselves with their princely salaries of $8,000 to $12,000 a year" and criticized Gompers's attitude toward strikes: "Gompers and those like him have proclaimed the imperial decree: there can only be a lawful strike when it has received the royal seal."

3. In a letter from Theodore Debs to Abraham Tuvim, May 25, 1921 (InTI, Debs Collection), Theodore Debs wrote that "the tales said to be circulated by Lucy Robins of her visits to Atlanta and the freedom said to be enjoyed by Gene on such occasions . . . are too silly to merit denial."

EVD to Lucy Robins

May 4, 1921
Atlanta, Georgia

My dear Comrade Lucy,

Your very kind letter of the 29th ult. with its interesting enclosures came to me today through the courtesy of Warden Zerbst, a most pleasant reminder of your welcome visit here a few days ago. Please let me thank you with a deep and grateful sense in the name of us all for your continued kindness and devotion. Your visit was a joy to us as always, and we are still being treated to the good things you brought us, as you have always done, in such generous abundance. I knew how you felt when we parted at the prison door and all my sympathy was with you as I saw the tears start in your eyes and heard the faltering note in your farewell words. I know how gladly you would have shared the prison with your comrades instead of taking your leave, could you have had your choice, and thus did you attest once more, with your tears, your fidelity and devotion to our cause—

Mr. and Mrs. Zerbst were indeed kind and considerate to us that day and we can never forget it. What a perfect spring day it was and how beautiful the whole world seemed as we went to the great farm and and forgot our cares amidst the calm and peaceable Holsteins,[1] the dear little calves and colts, and other beauties of nature. I wished with all my heart these precious luxuries so abundantly promised by Mother Nature might by enjoyed by my fellow prisoners as well as the children of poverty in the cities to whom they are denied as if they were also here in prison. The little pictures you sent perfectly delighted me. They are all so good and life-like, and the rustic background brings them into happy relief. Please accept my best thanks for the kindness of these precious little tokens of your visit, which are more than appreciated and will be fondly cherished. The action of the Georgia Federation[2] was most gratifying, thanks to your timely visit, and the telegrams sent to which you refer will have their good influence in the general results. You may say to President Gompers that we are entirely satisfied with the plea he and his associates made and the efforts they put forth in our behalf. They did all they could for amnesty, more could not be expected, and their efforts to secure the liberation of the political prisoners, I assure you, are fully appreciated. We thank each and every one who has endeavored to secure our freedom and shall hold them all in grateful remembrance. From the very beginning, dear Comrade Lucy, you have whole-heartedly given yourself to this work, and your unwaving devotion, your untiring efforts, and your personal kindness shall stand to your lasting credit on the book of remembrance. Do not get discouraged! Every effort put forth will bear fruit in the end. We have only to be patient and bide our time. Our cause is eternally just and the longer the struggle the greater the triumph. Believe me, always,

Lovingly and faithfully yours,
E. V. Debs

P.S. Please express my hearty thanks to Comrade Haller and through him to each member of Local 17 I.L.G.W. for their more than generous donation of the use of their office for the benefit of amnesty and say to them that if I ever have the opportunity I will reciprocate their kindness in any service I may be able to render them or their organization. Please also give them my love and comradely greetings, and the same to the members of the United Hebrew Trades, and to the Comrades of the Forward staff, especially Comrades Cahan, Winchevsky, Gillis, Lang and Zimethin.

I hope this may find you in good cheer, stronger spirit and hale of soul, never doubting and never fearing that, however the fates

may try or tempt us, we shall keep our heads erect, our faces toward the sunrise, and our hearts beating the stirring march toward Camp Victory.

ALS, InTI, Robins Papers.

1. One of the photographs in the Debs Collection at Indiana State University, dated April 1921 in Theodore Debs's hand, is of Debs surrounded by cows on the farm at the Atlanta prison.

2. In "Germer Visits Debs," *Socialist Party Bulletin*, May 1, 1920, Germer described the effort being made to secure the Georgia State Federation of Labor annual convention's passage of a resolution supporting general amnesty which was passed at the federation's convention in April 1921.

Spurgeon Odell to EVD

May 8, 1921
Minneapolis, Minnesota

My Dear Debs I still love you;

This is a most beautiful May morning; all things are radiant. Cool, peculiar to Minnesota, but of that bracing character that amounts to a tonic. The grass is of such a deep cast of green, so thick and healthful; the foliage, while not yet full, is healthful and proclaims a normal summer.

Can you wait till July? The doctor and I talk the matter over every time we meet. He is as confident as I. Hope never dies.

"Hope sees a star and listening love hears the rustle of a wing" We see the stars and hear the wings but it seems hard to transmit the sound to Washington. Do you know the reason? It is for the reason that all messages, wireless or otherwise, must pass thru Wall Street and the wall destroyes the essence.

Professor Herron has just written a powerful article dealing with world affairs, appearing in a recent number of the Dearborn Independent, the Ford weekly.[1] He admits his work to bring the U.S. into the war on the side of the allies and now sees how futile his efforts in the light of imperialism. That Germany has actually conquered France by transferring her spirit, or the spirit of Prussianism, to France which is now destroying her.

He thinks all the powers are unconsciously driving toward the destruction of every government in Europe, the U.S., thru its banking interests, being one of the main contributors. Witness the administration of Warren G. Harding accepting seats in the supreme council.[2]

The great swing to the Republican side was said to be a repudiation of the Versailles treaty and an insurance against European entanglements, but lo, it is the triumph of Standard oil over the Morgan wing of the money power and will be in full bloom in a few weeks with all the entanglements and more. Fooled again. Wise people, ready for change?

I always see these things coming too soon and have quit placing any limit as to time, but I feel sure some of the mightiest changes in history will develope within the next few months. Possible I should have said years instead of months even at that. But they are coming soon. Deflation and contraction continues, distress multiplies, producer and laborer suffers more and more, farm products are worthless. It is cheaper in the state of Iowa to burn corn than to burn coal. An Iowa farmer recently shipped 2000 sheep to Chicago which netted him 23 cts per head. That evening he paid 70 cts for lamb chops.

But witness the rise in salaries, in freight rates, passenger rates, sleeping car rates, gas rates, telephone rates, street car rates, express rates, at the same time reducing the wage rates. Even the courts are becoming drunken in the orgy of debauch and just watch the court decisions that will follow in the next few months. The whole outfit is hastening the very thing they fear.

Plain decency on the part of entrenched power would avert all danger of violence. But whom the Gods would destroy, etc.

There will be an early park picnic, soon, to decide and place the final touches on the July meeting.

Your most enduring and lasting lover.
Spurgeon Odell

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. In an article titled "In the Light of the London Conference," *Dearborn Independent,* May 7, 1921, George Herron wrote that "the peril that was Prussian has now passed to the French financiers and politicians" who would "destroy the last hope of democracy."

2. During the 1920 presidential campaign, Harding had strongly opposed United States membership in the League of Nations but had advocated an association of nations for the preservation of peace. On May 7, 1921, he appointed George Harvey, ambassador to England, to serve as the United States representative on the Allied Supreme Council, which was meeting in London to deal with various aspects of the postwar settlement, and other American representatives to serve as unofficial observers on the Reparations Commission and Conference of Ambassadors. *New York Times,* May 7, 1921.

EVD to Theodore Debs

[1921?] May 10
[Atlanta, Georgia]

This man was here to see me today and I sat with him a long time this afternoon and listened to his terrible, heart-breaking and tragic story. His experience and that of his wife (whose life it cost) in Russia was appalling. I have no doubt he tells the truth and he has documents to prove most of his statements. I felt extremely sorry for the poor fellow but I think I succeeded in persuading him that he was doing himself nor the cause any good by the course he is forming with the backing he is receiving from the plutocrats and profiteers, and that in Russia the revolution will take its course and only time can tell what will ultimately come of it. For the present there is undoubtedly a most unsettled and in many ways despotic and testing situation, but all revolutions are terrible in some of their stages of gestation, turmoil and blood-letting, and many cruel things come to pass, and many innocents are made to suffer before the grist is ground and the new born order has adjusted itself to the situation.

Jessie Molle, his wife,[1] who died in Russia I knew well. She was a noble woman, a true Socialist, and a hard and tireless worker for the cause to which she gave her life. They were honest & courageous enough to criticise what they thought wrong & they were imprisoned 4 months under frightful conditions. Jessie served notice on them that she would not submit to such revolting treatment and suffer such awful conditions at the hands of so-called comrades, and then went on a hunger strike, refusing food and drink, and died of self-starvation. It is most terrible to think of. The last time I saw Jessie she worked like a trojan to arrange a meeting for me at Sacramento Calif., a most conservative point where socialists are assaulted and driven from town, and she made a great success of the meeting. She was an indefatigable worker. Her dying request was that her husband should come to me and give me her last message as to how she died and the circumstances attending her death. It is a sad, sad story, one of the tragedies of the revolution, and it gives me a deep heart-ache to think of it. He had a written message from Chickerin,[2] the Russian foreign minister to me, a message of sympathy and greeting, but it was taken from him. He says I am held in the highest esteem by all the Russian leaders as well as the workers and that I would be given a great reception there.

He met Emma Goldman and Alex Berkman[3] in Petrograd. He had a visit at the home of Mrs. Carl Liebknecht (he and his wife Jessie en route to Russia) and they covered the graves of Rosa Luxembourg and Carl Liebknecht with flowers. You would have been intensely interested and profoundly moved by this most touching, tragic story of the revolution.

The poor fellow was thoughtful enough in his grief to bring me fruits and candies. He came here in fulfillment of the dying request of his wife whom he buried in Riga. He has a photograph of her in her coffin and of her grave and headstone. He was at Washington in the Amnesty parade and spent a good deal of time there, finding out all he could about my case. He says he is positive I will be out of here in a month and in less than two months at the outside. He asked me to make a note of it and I would see that he was right about it.

AL, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Maurice Schwartz and his wife, Jessie Molle Schwartz, were California socialists who visited Russia in the spring of 1920 to gather material for lecture work and to attend the second congress of the Third International in Moscow. According to Schwartz's account (*New York Times,* January 12 and 13, 1921) he and his wife were arrested and imprisoned from August 6 to December 3, 1920, during which time Mrs. Schwartz went on a "hunger strike to advertise our wrongs." She died on December 20, 1920, shortly after their release, and when he returned to the United States, he told the American press that "Communism in Russia is robberism . . . , persecution and execution without trial. It tolerates imprisonment, persecution and execution without trial." The *Socialist World,* January 15, 1921, urged "comrades to withhold judgment regarding the interview with Comrade Schwartz regarding his experience in Russia, now being published in the capitalist press."

2. Georgy Vasilyevich Chicherin (1872-1936) was Soviet foreign minister from 1918 to 1930.

3. Alexander Berkman (1870-1936) was born in Russia and in 1887 emigrated to the United States, where he soon entered into the activities of the small American anarchist movement. His attempted assassination of Henry Clay Frick during the Homestead strike in 1892 resulted in a fourteen-year imprisonment, which he described in the widely read *Prison Memoirs of an Anarchist* (1912), and his opposition to World War I led to a two-year prison term in Atlanta, where he was for a short time a fellow prisoner of Debs. Released from the Atlanta prison on October 1, 1919, Berkman, along with Emma Goldman, was deported to Russia in December 1919 and, like Goldman, was soon disillusioned by his experiences under the new Soviet regime. He left Russia in 1922 and spent his remaining years in Germany and France, working on behalf of imprisoned anarchists and syndicalists. His diary of his Soviet experience, *The Bolshevik Myth,* was published in 1925.

EVD to Theodore Debs and Gertrude Debs

May 15, [1921]
[Atlanta, Georgia]

My beloved Gertrude and Theodore,

If I were home what a sweet and happy evening we would have together! The thought of it makes me homesick but it is also a source of incomprehensible comfort to me. It has been so very long since last I clasped you in my arms, but the siege is almost ended and soon we shall spend happy hours together once more. You have been with me through all these days and months and years, and I have felt your loving presence and knew that in spirit, in heart and soul, there was no separation but that, if possible, we were nearer and dearer to each other than ever before. No day has passed since I left home that my message with my love and blessing has not gone to you and sweet Marguerite, and though I have not been able to write, you know, I am sure, that my heart is filled with all tender gratefulness for your precious and unfaltering devotion. I am so proud of dear Marguerite. The sweet child does honor to us all. Each advancing step[1] she takes thrills me with renewed pride and joy. She is a rare, sweet, lofty-spirited girl in whom our whole family is blessed and honored.

For myself I am getting along splendidly. I was never more completely the master of myself and my situation. I can not be punished for an instant and I know the day we have hoped and worked for is drawing near. I was most distressed about Kate's threatened loss of sight; as I was with Theo's, but her last letter gives confident assurance that her impaired vision will be fully restored. I hear from you regularly over the invisible wires. Your messages come to me in heartbeats and are answered in the same way. How very fortunate we have been in having dear Mabel Curry with us in these crucial days, and what a noble service she has rendered, and what a perfect devotion she has shown us! My heart's dearest love and kisses to you all!

Yours in eternal devotion—
Gene

When you see dear Mary give her my love and remember me also lovingly to dear Ed and Ranita

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Marguerite Debs had joined the faculty of the Eastern Division of Indiana State Normal School (later Ball State University) as an instructor of home economics.

EVD to Mabel Dunlap Curry

May 24, 1921
Atlanta, Georgia

Most precious Love, Tuesday the 24th

Are all the hours of these days beating in your heart, tumultuously, insistently, as they are in mine? I do not doubt they are and I sympathize with you in your loneliness and the agony of uncertainty and waiting. You are so delicate and refined and sensitive, and so completely the woman, the mother and lover that you feel these things infinitely more poignantly than men possibly can, and I can only imagine how much more the trial and pain of waiting is to you than it is to me, although I seem at times to have reached the extreme limit of endurance. It is said that great love endureth all things. Perhaps! But great love waiting for its own endureth only through the last extremity of impatience, loneliness and despair.

How my heart has cried for you and how I have yearned for the touch of your hand, the sound of your voice, the sight of your sweet face, and a precious hour or even a moment of your companionship. You are so beautiful and sweet to me, beautiful and sweet in every way and in all things, and you seem always to have been in my heart and my life and I can not think of a time when you were not with me and when I did not love you with tenderest regard, and deepest reverence, and all the passionate devotion man can have for the rarest, loveliest and most beautiful of souls. I am reaching for you this morning, my precious love, with both arms and all my heart. The love I bear you never can be told in words. I see in you all the beauty and grace, all the wit and vivacity, all the charm and loveliness that man adores in woman, and my love comprehends it all and vastly more that only your heart may understand. In your last exquisite love-message that seemed touched with pain you ask if I had heard the cry of your heart to mine. How can you ask, my precious one? Can you doubt for a moment that my heart is attuned to all your motives, all your changing moods, and that every vibration of ecstacy or pain and every cry of loneliness is faithfully registered and touches every responsive chord within me? By what magic, dear one, tell me, do you inspire such marvellous, absorbing, enthralling love? There is something subtle and elusive and ever-changing about you, peculiarly your own, that gives you irresistible charm and the most fascinating grace. You are so tall and lofty in spirit, so sweet and gracious in manner, so tender and compassionate in heart, and so great and white and radiant in soul that no one can possibly know you without loving

you devotedly, adoringly at once and forever. You are so modest, with all your brilliant gifts and attainments, utterly without guile, and you are happy to walk with the humblest and cast your lot with the poorest and most forsaken of God's creatures. Had I only his powers for a brief moment that you might have in life and all eternity your heart's desires! You were never so infinitely sweet and beautiful and precious as you are today! Never! And tomorrow and the next day and through all the days of endless time you will grow increasingly so and my love and adoration for you will grow accordingly. What an inspiration you are! You glorious little woman!! I clasp you in my arms and I love and honor and bless you, most precious one, with all my heart.

Faithfully and forever Yours,
Ura

ALS, InU, Lilly Library, Curry Papers.

Louis Kopelin to Theodore Debs

May 26, 1921
New York City

Dear Comrade Debs:

I enclose a copy of a letter I am sending today to Comrade Clark. As he may have told you, I wired last March at his request, $250 to be used in equipping Gene when he is released. At that time Gene's release was expected at any moment. Comrade Clark and Comrade Castleton were of the opinion that Gene's clothing furnished by the prison were of such inferior and cheap quality and appearence that clothing would have to be bought for him on the outside to enable him to travel properly on his way home. Also, our Atlanta Comrades believe that Gene should not use the transportation furnished by the prison but instead keep the ticket as a souvenier. I agreed with them and gladly furnished the funds.

As the enclosed copy of letter shows, there is need for Chiropractic treatment for Gene and I gladly authorized Comrades Clark and Castleton to have this done.

With best wishes, I am

Fraternally yours,
Louis Kopelin

[Theodore Debs's note]

This money was not used or accepted by Gene and the Appeal was so advised.[1]

Theo Debs

[Louis Kopelin letter[2] to David H. Clark]

Dear Comrade Clark: May 26, 1921

I was out of town the last few days and upon my arrival in the office I found your letter of the 20th inst. Of course it is satisfactory with me that you use part of the $250 for Chiropractic treatment for Comrade Debs. I trust that this treatment will be beneficial.

These treatments certainly cannot cost very much. From my acquaintance with Chiropracters, their charges usually are about $2 a treatment. This will take many treatments to make a dent in the sum Comrade Castleton is holding for Gene. It may be well not to let the Chiropracter know as to the source of the funds so that he may charge Debs the regular rates. There is no use squandering money, especially when it can be used for other good purposes.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Comrade Theodore Debs and Comrade Samuel M. Castleton.

With best wishes, I am

Fraternally yours,
Louis Kopelin

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. As noted, Louis Kopelin, as editor of the *Appeal to Reason*, had supported World War I and Kopelin served in the army during the war. Following the war the *Appeal* gave strong support to the political amnesty movement in general and to the "Free Debs" movement in particular.

2. Kopelin's letterhead identified him as president of the Newspaper Training Association in New York City.

Gertrude Laitinen to EVD

May 31, 1921
Fitchburg, Massachusetts

My Dearest Comrade:

You remember I promised you a snapshot of me, but nothing came of them so I cut one picture where I was standing with my cousin Matt, but I cut his picture off so that is why the picture looks so horrid but still you can see how I look and my dear dog is in the picture also.

Oh I do hope you can soon be out enjoying yourself as I have been. I have been bathing and fishing, but I didn't get one bite.

But still I wish I could give my few good times to all those young children who have to work in perspiration all day long in the mills.

The weather has been so very hot and our school dont stop till June 30. I would like to go to school if it was cool but on very hot days I just cant learn anything.

Ive been teasing my mother, "Lets go to RUSSIA" and I hope she would go. When Im about sixteen I think I could go. When I read how nice everything is except the war made much bad and it will take a little while yet before Russia will be as nice as before, not the people but the houses what have been broke down.

Now I will close sending my best Love to all the Political Prisoners and a great amount to you.

Yours for the World Revolution
Gertrude Laitinen

P.S. My nickname is Gloria

[EVD note to Theodore Debs]
(This rising young socialist spirit is what is going to save the world).

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

EVD to Mabel Dunlap Curry

June 7, 1921
Atlanta, Georgia

Most precious Love, Tuesday 7th

Another week without result and yet my hope is strong and my faith unshaken. We can not weaken for the cause we are fighting for can not fail. As the struggle proceeds between the forces of mammon and the forces of Liberation you come to me in a thousand fairy forms to give me strength and cheer me on. Last night when I went to bed I felt your presence and a little later you stood at my bedside and I saw you clearly as I ever saw you in the flesh. How my heart leapt at sight of you! It was reality! Your spiritual potency made it so, and you are never more manifest to my inner vision—my spiritual senses. Oh, the magic and the beauty and the power of Love! There is nothing beyond it. You stooped and caressed and kissed me, and bade me go to sleep. It was all so very natural, and so sweet and beautiful and comforting. Did you miss your astral body Sunday night?

I can tell you where it was and all about its mystical nocturnal migration. I can now understand what the ancient Latin philosopher meant when he said, "Omnia Vincit Amor." It is literally true. Love *is* omnipotent! It conquers everything and rules everywhere. Every planet that wheels in space, every star that glitters in the heavens proclaims its majesty and power. It is a great love, a most tender regard, and a truly beautiful devotion you have inspired in me, you wonderful little Woman! I see in you all that makes Woman the loveliest, sweetest and noblest of all God's creatures. You are so very beautiful and winsome, so gifted and yet so modest, so perfectly fascinating and yet so simple and unpretentious—how could I help loving you, my dear, and feeling myself blessed and exalted in your precious companionship! At thought of you my heart sings in rapture and my soul is set aglow with visions of beauty and happiness. You are to me, my precious love, a flowing fountain of life and inspiration. Your sweet, lofty, radiant spirit is reflected in your passionate love of service and your beautiful ideals. My heart is with and for you always, and I long to hold you in my arms. My love to you, my precious one, and all endearing greetings!

Faithfully forever
Ura

ALS, InU, Lilly Library, Curry Papers.

EVD to Mabel Dunlap Curry

June 14, 1921
Atlanta, Georgia

My dear Mabel,

Yesterday can never be forgotten by me. Your blessed Harriet,[1] angel of loveliness, was here. I can not tell you about her and her visit. My heart is too full. I shall try later but words can never tell how I was touched. She wept in my arms. Today she and Wrisley[2] are to be here. If only you could be with us! We can hardly think or speak of anyone else. How can I help asking to claim these sweet children as my very own? Sweet, wonderful Harriet looks through your eyes, feels with your heart, and speaks out of your soul. The dear child came with her arms filled with fruits and the finest candies and other delicacies. God bless her! She breathed your beautiful spirit and I felt an Angel of God had been here. I can't write, Mabel, while Harriet and Wrisely are here. I am not sending my "copy." My heart

is full but nothing remains to be written because it knows it cant be. My love with all my heart to you and your dear ones!

Yours always
Eugene V. Debs
#9653

Two years ago today I arrived at this prison.

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Harriet Oleson, Curry's daughter.
2. Wrisley Oleson, Curry's son-in-law.

Walter Hurt[1] to EVD

June 18, 1921
Chicago, Illinois

My beloved Comrade:

Theodore tells me you are not limited in the number of letters you may receive; so, although I feel guilty in adding to the burden of mail that I know comes to you, I am unable to resist the impulse to send you the written assurance that prison walls can not shut you away from my steadfast thoughts. Of course, I would not expect you to write to me under the circumstances, even did prison regulations permit; nor shall I trouble you with frequent messages—they are not needed to assure you of my unfaltering devotion.

Although you are in prison, you are the freest man in the world to-day, for your manhood can not be chained; and in your cell you are well companioned, for with you into prison went all the love and loyalty of the flower of American freemen.

Yours unto the end,
Walter Hurt.

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Debs's friend from their days together on the *Appeal to Reason* was now editing *The Paladin* in St. Louis.

Ellen R. Veblen[1] to EVD

June 30, 1921
Menlo Park, California

My dear, honored Sir:—

To those "in Macedonia" peace! What have I to say to you? What can be said during the torture of this hot weather in prison!

Only this—that a power resides in us we know little or nothing of! (You may be, probably are, one of those aware!)

This power might prove to be a comfort to you, supposing that you are unaware.

For twenty-two years I was the wife of Thorstein Veblen, and a more thorough materialist there could not have been. Within the last three weeks, beginning with the phenomena of table-tipping[2] in a sweet little family circle, the most important changes have befallen my philosophy. I have felt strongly inclined to tell you about it, even if for nothing more than your amusement. Perhaps you hear of these things often—but perhaps not. I now believe that we are living close on the border of unlimited interest and unlimited power to be evidenced in human affairs, and easily within reach—so easily!

From the *wonders* of table-tipping, I soon, much to my amazement, went on to automatic writing.[3] I am a mere primary scholar so I have not got much beyond that, though a little thought-reading into the minds of dear ones on the other side seems to be vouchsafed me (can not be proven, of course, but is felt.) Since the [one word illegible] phenomena have happened life is full of the strangest kind of phenomena—"coincidences."

I am sure if you have or can put a small, light table, and plenty of patience, about the third day of trying, if not before, it will move for you, answer questions (3 for yes, 1 for no, 2 for uncertain). It will while away some hours, perhaps marvellously. If your experience should be anything so significant as mine, it would put you on a new beautiful trail, and you would never be alone any more, nor unguided. You might work miracles.

I asked the table (in a small circle) if I could ever move it alone. It said no. When I got done I asked my mother whether I ever could, and in automatic writing received the answer, "yes—whole sceneries." The third day later the table was moving for me, and I was receiving the most intimate, precious presences. *I!* And then followed the most terrible moral awakening, through incredible reproach from *all* those I called up on the other side (except my mother who was patiently silent). After this almost maddening experience, and a night of de-

termined sleep, the next was a still more incredible message—the "Come unto me," and signed, Jesus Christ. Then a like message from my mother, ending "and *all* are compassionately entreated, Nellie." (the others had given me no hope.)

I did not know how to "come to Jesus," not in the least, but in my desperation I said to him in whom I had not believed—"take my life and live it for me—I cannot, I do not know how." When I next took up my pen to write a letter, the one who had expressed the most utter disparagement of me wrote her name and the wonderful words—"You are saved." I went out and found a New Testament some days later. I opened it, and then my eyes lighted on the word, solely and directly, "Thy sins are forgiven thee." Believe me, we live in a stranger world than we know. All power is ours. Try. Someone read to me this morning how Paul broke down his prison walls. I think of you always. Can not we do something?

Ellen Rolfe Veblen

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Ellen May Rolfe (1865-1926) was married in 1888 to Thorstein Bunde Veblen (1857-1929), author of *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (1899), *The Theory of Business Enterprise* (1904), and a number of other works famous for their critiques of the capitalist system and the prevailing economic and social wisdom. Their marriage ended in divorce in 1911.

2. For a time, "table tipping" reached near-epidemic proportions in Europe and the United States among believers who sought "psychic powers" by sitting around a table, placing their hands lightly on it, and awaiting communication from subconscious or extraneous sources of knowledge and information. Critics declared that the animation of the table, associated with the practice, was the result of unconscious muscular action on the part of the "tippers." Nandor Fodor, *Encyclopedia of the Psychic Science* (University Books, 1966), 374-75.

3. Automatic writing was based on a belief that "scripts could be produced without the control of the conscious self." Ibid., 19.

Thomas Mitchell[1] to EVD

July 9, 1921
Glasgow, Scotland

Dear Comrade Debs,

I have to convey to you the best of good wishes and good luck from our Comrade John McLean M.A.[2] of Glasgow who is serving three months in prison for urging the workers, amongst other things not to read sporting papers or bet on horse racing but to give their money to the Socialists and it would be put to a better purpose.

I am writing at the request of Comrade McLean and am to convey to you his endorsement of your glorious words on the day you were forced to leave the arena.

With Fraternal Greetings from John McLean,
and All your other Comrades in Britain,

yours Fraternally,
Thomas Mitchell
National Secretary.

[EVD note to Theodore Debs]
Theo: Sept. 20th

This letter was handed to me by Warden Dyche,[3] it being with the book etc. that Castleton left with him this afternoon. You will see that it is dated July 9th. Please drop a line to Comrade Mitchell and acknowledge its receipt and tell him that Comrade Castleton, in whose care it came, was away from Atlanta several months, which accounts for the delay. Tell him I was greatly pleased with his fine message, though regretting to learn of the imprisonment of Comrade McLean, whose term of imprisonment I hope has expired by this time. Tell him that I can readily understand the case of Comrade McLean and that I know how cheerfully he went to prison in testimony of his loyalty to the cause for which no individual sacrifice is too great.

Tell him that they may arrest us as they will but that they can never arrest the progress of the movement of the working class toward their emancipation. Send our love and greetings to Comrade Mitchell and Comrade McLean and all the comrades in Great Britain.

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Thomas Mitchell (1885-1935) was a Scottish engineer who joined the Socialist Labor party in Glasgow in 1908 and later served as national secretary of the party.

2. John MacLean (1879-1923) was a pioneer Scottish labor and socialist leader who was imprisoned on four separate occasions by the British government for his antiwar activities during World War I and his role as "Consul-General" for Scotland for the Soviet government following the war. *New Leader*, January 19, 1924. In a letter to *New Day* (July 31, 1920) MacLean called Debs's imprisonment "a black, burning disgrace to the boasted freedom supposed to exist in America."

3. James Edward Dyche (1866-1926) headed the Oklahoma delegation to the 1920 Republican National Convention, where he was a strong supporter of Warren Harding. In June 1921 he replaced Warden Zerbst (who was transferred to Leavenworth) as warden at Atlanta and, like Zerbst, befriended Debs and worked in many ways to make Debs's confinement as painless as the rules would allow.

Tom Clifford to EVD

July 10, 1921
Cleveland, Ohio

My Dear Comrade 'Gene:

I have postponed writing you from day to day, awaiting action by Congress on the peace resolution,[1] which happily has at last been consummated. Although I have nothing to warrant a prediction except my knowledge of the genus politician and the influences that force him into action, I am constrained to think that the liberation of all political prisoners is due at an early date. At any rate, that is our only hope. The working class is too indifferent to the fate of its martyrs to ever marshal enough solidarity to force such action from the ruling class representatives. Considered in the mass, they are selfish individualists, unworthy of the efforts that a few brave souls like yourself have exerted to rouse them into activity. After a quarter of a century of labor on my own part, I have been regretfully forced to the conclusion that they are not amenable to education, and are willing to remain wage slaves if the ruling class will only keep their bellies filled. My hope of a social change now rests solely upon the ever increasing difficulty of capitalism to function, which must eventually result in a complete breakdown. Hungry millions will then, through the instinct of self-preservation, be forced into activity.

I have just finished reading the proceedings of the Socialist Party Convention at Detroit.[2] I blush with shame when I remember that I was once an integral part of it. However, there is some consolation in the almost certain prospect that it will be a corpse within a year. Its demise will clear the way for a real political and economic organization of the working class.

Comrades Margaret Prevey and Charley Baker spent several hours with me at my home recently, and we reviewed the whole situation. When you come back to us a revelation is awaiting you. While your incarceration is merely a memory to the majority of the workers, yet I assure you, my dear Comrade, that the militant minority have not forgotten you.

Longing for the news of your liberation, I am,

Your Comrade in the "Great Cause"
Tom Clifford

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. The joint resolution, declaring the war with the Central Powers to be at an end, was passed by Congress on July 2, 1921.

2. June 26-30, 1921. Among other actions the convention voted "to remain without international affiliations" and passed a resolution calling "the advocacy of the general strike in the United States under the present conditions . . . folly." Both actions would have been repugnant to Clifford, who, as noted, had left the Socialist party to join the Communist Labor party and later the Workers party.

EVD to Mabel Dunlap Curry

July 12, 1921
Atlanta, Georgia

My own Dearest, Tuesday 12th

It is well we do not know what the days hold for us from week to week. Hope lures us on and tides us over, then lures us on again and so on ad infinitum. Hope is such a cheerful prevaricator and we have good reason to know it, but we continue to be deceived and never lose faith in him. I thought surely I should see you before this time. It seemed to me the extreme limit had been reached and that I could wait no longer and keep my sanity. What have the "Mad Hatter" and the "Whirling Dervish" done to me that so obsess me and keep me in a state of "restlessness" that almost drives me frantic? I used to be considered rational but I make no pretence of being so now. The madness is upon me and I am a willing victim. It is the one thing I have no wish to remedy or control. I wish it to have unbridled sway for reckless as it seems God is its directing force and nothing can prevail against it in the end. Love is God or there is no God, and God is love or nothing at all. The love I have for you, dearest, can not be told. It has to be lived and oh, how it throbs and thrills and aches, and how passionately it demands its own! The more it is desired the more insistent it grows. Can you imagine how I yearn to see you, to have you with me, to hold you in my arms and love you with all my heart? Do you know that you grow more beautiful every day? Never before were you so perfectly sweet and lovely and divine. You are so radiant and wonderful and as I think of you I thrill with love and adoration. How my heart calls for you, my beloved, this morning! Do you not hear its cry? I must, I shall see you soon. You are the world and all to me and I am with all my heart.

Your own adoring
Ura

ALS, InU, Lilly Library, Curry Papers.

H. Metzger[1] to EVD

July 16, 1921
Joseph, Oregon

Dear Comrade:

Old School Mate though we are far apart but my mind thoughts and Heart turned to you. Probably remember [me] as a Small Raged Boy excepting your urgent invitation to go home with you and have diner from the old Siminary of Terhaute Ind don't remember whether our Teatcher at that time was Silvia Profst or Sifert as my memory is not as good as it was in my younger days. I will be 70 years of age Feb. next is there any way of obtaining a photo of yourself if thare is would like the [one word illegible] the world to have it. I would like to have it just as you appear and look at this time. I will gladly pay the Bill.

And let me now also state the Bill will be and I will close hope this will [find] you in good health will adress this to the Ripsaw and have forwarded to you as I do not no how to direct this.

Respectfully
H. Metzger
Box 162
Joseph Oregon

[EVD note to Mabel Dunlap Curry?]

An echo from the far distant past—the voice of an old school-mate of 55 years ago. He has the names of the old teachers—Treplo (who later died in the civil war) Seifert and Probst.[2] Theo only remembers the last named. The old "Seminary" stood on the site of the present Normal School. How well I remember it! If there are any of those window portraits left pls. have Theo put one in a tube and mail it. If not have Theo. send him one each of those elections in the little back room. There are four kinds of my picture in as many envelope boxes on the North end of the lower shelf in the back room. Please write to tell him how happy I am to hear of my old school-mate and tell him I send him my love and greetings and best wishes.

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Metzger was a schoolmate of Debs at the Old Seminary School, a private school in Terre Haute that served as both an elementary and college-preparatory school. Debs transferred to the city's public school in 1867.

2. Treplo, Seifert, Probst, and a fourth faculty member, Abbie Flagg, made up the faculty of the Old Seminary School. Debs recalled receiving from Flagg a Bible with a flyleaf admonition, "Read And Obey," and declared that he "never did either."

Lincoln Phifer[1] to EVD

July 19, 1921
Kansas City, Kansas

Dear Very Dear Comrade Debs:

Yesterday I sat down with your picture in my hand, thought long of you and your heroism, and of the days when we were on the Appeal together, and felt that I simply must once more stretch out my hands to you and give you greeting.

I have remained silent so long because I did not wish to bother you in any way.

And yet I know there is so little that may be said, though much can be felt. You have become very great in the last two years of martyrdom, and I look back on the past with the gratitude that it was my privilege to have known you in prison.

To even try to express my love, my appreciation, my sympathy were useless. I cannot do it. It is one of those things that are beyond words.

To me it is very evident why you are still kept there. You told it in saying that it was for what you might say in the time when the masters were seeking to fully subjugate the workers. It may be some consolation to know that industrial unionism, the thing for which you fought so long, is now almost sweeping the country. The crisis is so great that at last workers see it is the only sort of unionism that offers any hope whatever.

In one way, it seems that the work of the years has been fruitless. Seen otherwise, I think we did better than we knew. The seed was planted, and it is springing up where we little expected it. I do not think we are yet at the bottom of the crash, by any means. But I am sure that in the end we shall win. And when {we} do I shall delight, possibly on the other side of death, to look up in your face and thank you.

You may wish to know a few words about myself. I got in general my first message out in The New World,[2] that is, the philosophy of history. Then I sold the office and discontinued the paper. Last February I began work as a reporter for the Kansas City Kansan, Capper's[3] new daily. I am now doing considerable editorial writing for it, the only one on the staff, except the editor, who does that. Of course, I cannot express myself fully; but Capper is fairly liberal, and it might be worse. Also, I am going to school, {as it were} and learning daily newspaper work from the inside, finding it all we knew it to be, and more. Among other things, I interviewed Judge Pollock,[4] but he did

not know of when we were before him in court, the time the beast mouthed its food gingerly.

I am doing other writing, of course. I have no thought but that I shall again appear, this time with the biggest hearing I ever had, to tell of what the beast will do, and how it will be overthrown. It is then that I shall get mine, as you are getting your's now. But the time is not quite ripe for this message.

I do not hear often from the regular socialist workers, but do from such as became readers of The New World. It may interest you to know I have received a companion play to "Hamlet in Heaven," entitled, "Macbeth the Damned."[5] Did you hear that Jon Wayland[6] when intoxicated tried to shoot himself, but inflicted only a scalp wound? I am told that the Appeal is about to suspend, though I do not know for sure.

As for the immediate family, they are all loyal to you. Lyndon, the oldest, is in Cincinnati, married and has a child, a boy, three years old. Ardene is teaching the piano in the state normal at Emporia. Leon, the youngest and biggest of the lot, is at home, but will probably go to college this winter. Mrs. Phifer is well. We often talk of you and are loyal to you.

I do not expect you to reply to this. It is merely an expression poorly made of a heart that would say more.

My love, my blessing.
Lincoln Phifer

Present address: 921 Orville Ave., Kansas City, Kansas

[EVD note to Theodore Debs]

Please be sure to acknowledge this with my thanks and love. I never had a truer friend than Lincoln Phifer. He is one of the sweetest souls I have ever known. He has given his all to the cause. God bless him and his family! Spent some never-to-be-forgotten {hours} under their hospitable roof. No I had not heard of Jon Wayland. That is sad indeed. Tell Lincoln I can never forget the happy days we spent together. I could not help loving him. He did me every possible kindness his loving heart could think of. Tell him I am happy to know all his family are doing well and that we shall meet again. To make him laugh in the way I used to see him, tell him I still hold the bill against him for medical services with compound interest.

My love to dear Lincoln and all his blessed household.

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. As noted, Lincoln Phifer served with Debs on the *Appeal to Reason*.
2. For a short time in 1916-17, Phifer published the *New World* in Girard, Kansas.

Debs praised the new publication in the *Rip-Saw* (September 1916) and told readers that "the 'automatic' writing which the editor informs us passes through him as an instrument and brings communications from Shakespeare, Lincoln, and other immortals is brilliant and fascinating."

3. Arthur Capper (1865-1951) was governor of Kansas from 1915 to 1919 and United States senator from Kansas from 1919 to 1949. He was the owner of a number of Kansas newspapers, including *Capper's Weekly,* and launched the *Kansas City Kansan* in 1921.

4. As noted, John C. Pollock was judge of the United States District Court in Kansas, where Debs and Phifer appeared in several cases growing out of their work on the *Appeal.*

5. In 1916, Phifer published *Hamlet in Heaven,* a five-act play "purporting to have been written by William Shakespeare through automatic writing." "Macbeth the Damned" has not been found.

6. One of the sons of J. A. Wayland, publisher of the *Appeal to Reason.*

EVD to Mabel Dunlap Curry

August 2, [1921]
[Atlanta, Georgia]

My own beautiful Love,

Another month has passed and brought us nearer to the happy day that ends our separation. What inexpressible joy awaits us on that blessed day! The love that unites us has grown with the days and months and years until today it is more beautiful than ever and its power is irresistible. As a matter of fact we have not been separated at all for a single moment. You have been in my heart and I have been in holy spiritual communion with you through all this exile. And how you have worked and suffered, how you have been buffeted by conflicting elements, and how you have given your very soul in loving service from the very beginning! My heart is full of it but no words can ever express it. What a woman, what a beautiful, miraculous being you are! You grow more and more beautiful and radiant in my eyes. Your spiritual loveliness crowns your splendid moral courage and rectitude. You are the most beautiful and daring and unselfish of women. There are no bounds to your love and loyalty, your service and consecration. You are radiant and aglow, body and soul, with the integrity of nature. And what you have been to me! No other living mortal would or could have done the work under the circumstances you did, and served me as you have done. Love you, my dear? With every breath and every heart-beat. And what an infinitely beautiful love it is! I thrill with every thought of it, and your pure, sweet, wonderful Womanhood lifts me ever upward toward God and the

stars. You are divinely precious to me, dearest, and I clasp you in my arms and kiss and bless you in all tenderness of heart and with all the passionate love of my soul.

Your own and ever
Ura

ALS, InU, Lilly Library, Curry Papers.

Theodore Debs to Oswald Garrison Villard[1]

August 2, 1921
Terre Haute, Indiana

Dear Mr. Villard:—

Please allow me to return my warmest thanks and to assure you of my deep appreciation of your thoughtfulness, kindness and confidence in granting to Mrs. Curry the privilege of permitting {me} to see the copy of your letter to Mr. Odell, of Minneapolis, which contains so much of an important and interesting nature.

It seems, judging from your interview at the white house, that socialists and liberals have not alone been the victims of Wall street's appendage—the American Legion. The President's[2] likewise been raided, and while he does not make the confession, it is quite apparent that he beat an inglorious retreat and, in doing so, revealed a moral cowardice that must be mortifying to his associates and intimates—if not to himself.

In glaring contrast with the President's attitude allow me to warmly congratulate and heartily commend THE NATION for its dauntless courage in giving to the public the series of articles by Arthur Warner on "The Truth About the American Legion."[3] The facts herein stated will do more to suppress the reign of terror inaugurated by these gangs of high-binders who, at the behest of and in the interest of the Wall street looters and in the name of "100% Americanism," rape law, outrage all sense of decency, and who would, if they could, destroy the last vestige of freedom in this country—than anything I have yet seen. The periodicals with the stamina of THE NATION are all too few.

Appreciating fully your good efforts in behalf of our political prisoners and wishing you and THE NATION all success I am

Sincerely yours,
[Theodore Debs]

TLc, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Oswald Garrison Villard (1872-1949) was born in Germany during a trip to that country by his father, Henry Villard, the American financier, industrialist, and railroad builder, and his mother, Helen Francis Garrison Villard, the daughter of William Lloyd Garrison. As editor of the *Nation*, which had been acquired by his father in 1881, Villard transformed the magazine from a weekly literary supplement into one of the leading liberal voices in America and the medium through which he expressed his interests in race relations, women's rights, the peace movement, and a wide variety of other controversial causes and issues.

2. On July 29, 1921, John G. Emery, national commander of the American Legion, wired Harding to promise "a fight to the finish if Eugene V. Debs and other war prisoners are pardoned at this time." *New York Times*, July 30, 1921. Letters and telegrams with a similar message poured into the Department of Justice at the same time. National Archives, Records of the Office of Pardon Attorney, Political Prisoners Case Files, Record Group 204. Harding and Attorney General Daugherty announced that no releases were intended until after the formal promulgation of Congress's joint peace resolution.

3. In a series of articles in the *Nation*, beginning in the issue of July 6, 1921, Warner, who was on the *Nation* staff and specialized in free speech issues, described the Legion's "long, long trail of lawlessness" in suppressing dissent in the name of "100% Americanism."

Albert M. Todd[1] to EVD

August 10, 1921
Atlantic City, New Jersey

Dear Comrade:

I address you as "Comrade," for though I am not a member of your political party, I realize, and have for years, that your life has been unselfishly devoted to those causes of humanity which would bring to all the peoples of the world, justice, happiness and universal fellowship.

It has often happened in the history of the world that those who have contributed most largely to human progress and happiness, have often been incarcerated in prison, and often suffered martyrdom, because they dare speak the truth. Even He upon whose teachings the Christian Church was founded, suffered martyrdom. It is not strange therefore, in this age when men and nations are controlled by selfish instincts, and are willing even to organize murderous wars if they can secure a profit thereby, should desire to imprison those who would settle international disputes through reason and justice. Your imprisonment is a continued proof that your life and ideals, are in accord with absolute and universal justice. I have written the Pres-

ident urging your immediate release, and trust you may be promptly restored, with your powers unlessened, to your family and friends.

Fraternally Yours
A. M. Todd

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Albert May Todd (1850-1931) was elected as a fusion candidate for Congress in Michigan in 1896 and served one term (1897-99) in that body before returning to Michigan to launch a peppermint-oil business, that eventually led to his becoming the "Peppermint King" of the world. Todd was president of the Public Ownership League of America from 1916 to 1922 and honorary president of the league, to which he lent substantial financial support, from 1922 until his death. He was best remembered for his great collections of rare books, art, and manuscripts, most of which were donated to public agencies, including the University of Michigan.

Roger N. Baldwin to Theodore Debs

August 24, 1921
New York City

Dear Mr. Debs:

The newspapers have frequently reported that Samuel Casleton,[1] Atlanta attorney, represents your brother.

Will you be good enough to let us know whether he does now represent him, and if not, whether he has represented him at any time in the past? Is so, why were his services as Debs' attorney terminated? We shall be glad to keep confidential any information you wish so treated.

Sincerely yours,
Roger Baldwin

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. As noted, Samuel Castleton was an Atlanta attorney who regularly visited Debs in prison there and wrote a number of articles describing Debs's condition and treatment.

Theodore Debs to Roger N. Baldwin

August 26, 1921
Terre Haute, Indiana

Dear Mr. Baldwin:—

Replying to your favor of the 24th. inst. I beg to say that my brother is not now, nor has he been since entering prison, legally

represented in any way by any one as there has been no occasion for engaging legal talent. Mr. Castleton of Atlanta, of whom you speak, is a friend and a comrade and on numerous occasions has been very kind, but he has not served my brother in any professional way.

Sincerely yours,
[Theodore Debs]

TLc, InTI, Debs Collection.

Theodore Debs to Warren G. Harding

August 30, 1921
Terre Haute, Indiana

Dear Sir:—

Your decision in the case of political prisoners, based upon the assumption that we are still at war with Germany,[1] as reported in the press dispatches, is not only silly and disgusting but cowardly.

You may think you are fooling the people. So thought the unlamented Wilson, which accounts for your present occupancy of the White House.

An illustrious predecessor, a plain, honest and courageous man in the line of presidents, said some things about "fooling the people" which the politicians at Washington would do well to read and ponder over to their everlasting advantage.

Very truly yours,
Theodore Debs

TLc, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. As noted, the joint resolution by Congress declaring an end to the war was passed in July 1921. A peace treaty with Germany was signed in Berlin on August 25, 1921, and ratified by the United States Senate on October 18, 1921. Harding had announced that no action on the release of Debs and other political prisoners would be taken until the formal promulgation of the treaty, which came on November 15, 1921. *New Day*, September 3, 1923; *New York Times*, October 19, November 19, 1921.

Jacinto Albarracin C.[1] to EVD

September 4, 1921
Bogota, Republic of Colombia

To our glorious chief Eugene Victor Debs
Venerable martyr:

This is the time that the cries contained in the throats of the Ibero-american socialists long to launch forth on those immense horizons, round about your immortal words which come to us in these parts filled with hope, oh! martyr!

Now our nonconformist hearts are whirling like rebel eagles around your name and your word which we adore as a mandate, oh martyr!

This is the time in which Colombian socialism in open campaign against the old doctrines of ancestral routine, prejudices and creator interests, is struggling as a modern Sisyphus.

Now your deeds, oh martyr, and your pains, have pierced us in the inmost recesses of the heart, most sympathetically, and we have proposed at your orders we will march to the abyss in America to raise our flag.

Now I desire to communicate with you, oh martyr, and that you give your answer to this, in order that I fulfill my desires which are those of comrades.

It is time that we hope for your immediate liberation from the evil prison and thus we are going to direct a request to President Harding in order that the American people may order your liberty, oh martyr!

At your service whatever be the spot that you signal, I promise you not to quit in the struggle.

Your most affectionate admirer,
Jacinto Albarracin C. [?]

Delegate who represented Colombian socialism at the panAmerican congress in Mexico

Bogota, Republic of Colombia

I'm sending periodicals by this mail.

ALS (with translation from Spanish), InTI, Debs Collection.

1. In an "Open Letter to Eugene V. Debs, 'The Prisoner of Atlanta' " (*New Leader*, February 6, 1926), Albarracin was identified as "one of the active labor leaders of Colombia."

Guy Bogart to EVD

September 29, 1921
Los Angeles, California

My Beloved Saint Gene:

May I not once more, with the reverence and the love of a disciple submit this homage of erect and glad free comradeship to my Big Brother Gene who thru the months and the years has not weakened, has not yielded, but has ever stood with one hand upraised to point the way forward and the other clasped tight in the grip of the brother still in darkness.

The world has changed greatly since 1914 and new standards are now being used. It is a queer state of society in which we now find ourselves; but of course after the delerium of fever will come the convalesence. I have conceived an expression for those of real vision—The TECHNICIANS OF THE DAWN. Too many have been talking of the newer social order as a vague meaningless term. There has been too much wild protest at times, I fear; but thru it all are those who really see the Light of Love. Long I held a pet theory which my comrades derided, that of the Dynamics of Love. Use it as we use a crowbar—i.e., by studying the laws of the love-dynamics thru living it and practising our brotherhood. I felt that in your life of service—and I conceive service as love in action—I had sufficient justification for my concept of the Dynamics of love. That, however, was before you sanctified Atlanta and made it a shrine to which untold millions will journey in centuries to come. How was I to realize that even Gene Debs could put so much of meaning into the word LOVE.

Do you have the works of Dr. Ralph Adams Cram[1] in the prison library? He is, as you doubtless know, Boston's leading architect and one of the nation's great thinkers. His five little books published by the Marshall Jones Company of Boston ("The Nemesis of Mediocrity," "The Sins of the Fathers," "The Great Thousand Years," and "Walled Towns," (with a fifth I cannot recall)[2]; then his "Substance of Gothic.[3] These give some illuminating ideas for thot anent present day conditions. Dr. Cram is a Roman Catholic[4] and I do not mean that ALL of his views are correct. Like Pilate, I stand today and wonder, "What is Truth?" But there are philosophical points in Dr. Cram's little books which are wonderfully dynamic and I am sure you will be more than pleased to read what he has to say. In some ways (tho from a different angle) he has some quite similar views to those of Lincoln Phifer.[5]

My work has more and more of late years gone back to the truths of Mysticism which marked my childhood and earlier research in

young manhood. These, in connection with a close study of the economic and social conditions over a long perspective of time have given me what I think is a much clearer view and understanding than I was ever able to grasp when trying to accept what neither my heart nor my reason could ever accept: the economic determinism nor the materialistic concept of human society.

Thru the lessons of Reincarnation and of Emerson's Compensation[6] I see a cause back of all this life which were else a vale of tears indeed as some of the orthodox folks would have us believe. Your trials are thus transmuted to the highest goal of attainment. You will be a model for untold ages as to conduct and fortitude.

One cannot help wondering what storm-clouds yet hover beyond the horizon; yet we know the winds of destiny shall blow then away for a new educational standard.

We hear much of education. What of its method? of its content? There is much to be done in the educational field. Those who have definite ideas there are those whom I mentioned above as TECHNICIANS OF THE DAWN. We out here in the world, imprisoned in the mesh of vibrations which foul the atmosphere gaze with astonished admiration at the bright light which shines thru the world from the cell of No. 9653, where a Superman has shed the vibrations of love until a prison has become a holy temple.

My love, dear Gene, and the love of Lucy and of Robert,[7] and of all members of the household.

Your friend and comrade,
Guy Bogart

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Ralph Adams Cram (1863-1942) was a leading architect who was especially important in shaping American church architecture in the first forty years of the twentieth century. He was the author of many books on architecture, arts, and crafts, which he sought to relate to an ideal vision of pre-Reformation England as a guide not only to architecture but to religious and social life as well.

2. *Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh* (1919).

3. *The Significance of Gothic Art* (1918).

4. Cram was baptized and confirmed in the Episcopal church.

5. As noted, Lincoln Phifer's "Push Philosophy" had been one of the most popular features in the *Appeal to Reason.* These essays on "country store socialism" were collected in a book in 1910. In 1918, Phifer published *Old Religions Made New,* in which he sought to demonstrate a divine plan to transform through "natural processes" the old religions into modern ones, capable of dealing with twentieth-century problems.

6. In the essay, "Compensation," Emerson described a law of compensation in human affairs, a balancing mechanism similar to the operation of physical and natural law.

7. Bogart's wife and son.

Otto Branstetter to EVD

September 30, 1921
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Gene:

We are all delighted by Comrade Maurer's report of your physical and spiritual condition. We had expected to force a show-down from the administration within the next month, following the approval of the treaties with Germany and Austria, and either secure amnesty or a flat refusal to grant it. The fight being made on the treaties, however, will give the administration an opportunity for stalling a while longer as it is quite definitely understood that no action will be taken until the treaties are out of the way.

Comrade Walter Nellis,[1] attorney of New York who has been connected with a large number of political and deportation cases, has send me a statement by Spike Moore[2] in which he enumerates seven distinct cases in which Comrade Castleton, as attorney for political prisoners, had treated them unfairly, if not dishonestly, and requesting that the party make some official disclaimer of any endorsement or recommendation of Castleton. I regret to say that similar complaints have been received from comrades outside the prison who have intrusted legal business to Castleton.

Spike Moore's statement contains the following in reference to yourself:

> Samuel Castleton has on many occasions represented himself as the personal representative of Eugene V. Debs without his consent. Debs has on many occasions warned other convicts not to come to him to recommend Castleton as he (Castleton) does not represent him. I was released from Atlanta on the third day of August 1921, and within a month prior to that time, Debs had, in a conversation with me, specifically denied the fact the Samuel Castleton was his legal representative or ever had been.

Will you please inform me whether or not you are correctly quoted in this statement?

There is a continued and insistent demand for the publication of your Canton speech. You will remember that I took this matter up with you through Theodore sometime last year and that you expressed a wish that the speech not be published until you were out and able to read proof on it. In accordance with your wishes I gave up the idea of its publication until you would be released and could O.K. it. Now, however, the demand for its publication has been renewed and

one of the papers is considering publishing it. The speech as reported by the government and introduced in the trial at Cleveland is a matter of public record and there is nothing to prevent anyone desiring to do so, publishing it as there introduced. The National Office wants to publish that speech and feels that it should have the privilege of doing so ahead of other organizations or publications.[3]

Will you give your consent to our publishing this speech as introduced at the Cleveland trial with a foreword to the effect that it is substantially correct, but that you are not responsible for grammatical errors and the number of minor inaccuracies?

With best wishes, I am

Fraternally yours,
Otto Branstetter
Executive Secretary.

[EVD note to Theodore Debs]
Dear Theo:

Please answer and say that I am most gratified to hear that Comrade Maurer made such an encouraging report of his visit here, a visit that afforded me great pleasure as I have always held Comrade Maurer in high esteem and had not seen him for a long time.

As to his inquiry concerning Comrade Castleton I have to say that personally Comrade C. was always very kind to me, but that he was *never my attorney*, as I have had no occasion to have an attorney since I have been here. Some prisoners here, having noticed in the papers that he was my attorney, had some dealings with him that proved unsatisfactory and they complained to me of having been treated unfairly by him. Several complaints came to me from political prisoners in regard to Castleton and for a long time I defended him against all charges until I realized that there must be some foundation for such complaints. Finally it was reported that a lawyer who served a term here and was released had entered into an arrangement with Castleton to secure the release {of prisoners} on payment of {a} certain amount of money. A number of prisoners to whom the proposition was made asked my advice and I warned them to have nothing to do with it, and I am told it was on account of this scheme to fleece the prisoners that Castleton was permanently barred from the prison. I regret very much having to make this kind of a report for so far as I am personally concerned Comrade Castleton always treated me with all kindness and consideration.

Please say to Comrade Branstetter that it gives me pleasure to comply with his request in the matter of the Canton speech. I have only to suggest that in the *foreword* he proposes, it be stated that the

speech, though I have never had the chance to go over it, and it contains some minor errors and inaccuracies, is substantially correct— Please say that Joe Coldwell joins me in loving greetings to him and Comrade Winnie and all the comrades at headquarters. Please be sure to send this letter to Mabel.

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Walter Nelles (1883-1937) was born in Leavenworth, Kansas, and earned B.A. and law degrees from Harvard. He served for a time as counsel for the National Civil Liberties Bureau and the American Civil Liberties Union during and after World War I and frequently served as attorney in pacifist and conscientious-objector cases. In 1929 he joined the faculty of Yale Law School, where he taught courses in the history of labor injunctions. *New York Times,* April 1, 1937.

2. Probably Sam Moore, the black prisoner befriended by Debs at Atlanta.

3. The *Socialist World* (November 1921) announced the publication of Debs's Canton speech as "a 32 page pamphlet on good book paper" for ten cents a copy.

Katherine Metzel Debs to Kate Richards O'Hare

October 17, 1921
Terre Haute, Indiana

Dear Comrade:

I am enclosing a letter which I received and which I do not understand. You surely have not sent out an appeal in my behalf,[1] unknown to me. My wants are few and are amply provided for without such an effort on the part of the Comrades.

You no doubt have the data I sent you Saturday. This A.M. I sat very reluctantly for a photo and this one may not answer the purpose any better than the old ones I have—, but you will be better pleased no doubt. Tomorrow I shall see the proofs and rush you one as {soon as} I possibly can.

Mother, I am glad to say is very much improved—Please don't do anything more in the way of an appeal for me, and please return this letter that I may answer it without delay and return the money.[2]

Love to you all.
Katherine M. Debs.

ALS, MoH, O'Hare Papers.

1. In the *Rip-Saw* (October 1921), O'Hare noted that "funds galore have been raised . . . for the freedom of Gene Debs" but that "the financial situation of the Debs family" had been "neglected." She proposed to "remedy this omission through the

Katherine Debs Testimonial Edition of the *Rip-Saw*, the Katherine Debs Testimonial Fund, and the Katherine Debs Testimonial Album," the last-named of which would contain the signatures of "A Hundred Thousand Friends and Lovers of Her and Gene."

2. The Katherine Debs Testimonial Fund would have raised money from *Rip-Saw* readers and would have been given "directly to Katherine Debs . . . to be used by her in the manner that will bring her the most comfort."

Theodor Beckstrom[1] to EVD

October 18, 1921
Washington, D.C.

My dear Friend:

I hobe and pray that my letter to your have awake you to come out as a man and work for the RED WHITE and BLUE. and burn up that Red flag who is only a Signal or Emblem to the Straith road to Hell. lett me hears from your and I will forward more FACT'S to your, And if that not will help, I will Arusse all American Protestant Churches Pray for your.

your Friend.
Theodor Beckstrom.

Postcard TS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Beckstrom's postcard identified him as the "designer and inventor" of underwater salvage equipment.

EVD to Theodore Debs

October 18, 1921
[Atlanta, Georgia]

My dearly loved Theo—

The packet goes to you this morning. Pls. send letters for Mabel to her by first mail. It is now Indian summer and the days are as fine as perfection and beauty can make them. It must be glorious now in the Woods in the mellow Autumn sunshine. Some day we shall again revel in it together. The treaty will soon be disposed of now—I suppose—and then: We shall see. We have a heart for any fate, and we are winning every minute.

My heart was never so full as now of love and devotion for you

and Gertrude and Marguerite, and I am until the last faint echo dies away

Your inseparable pard
Gene

Please send note attached to Mabel.

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

EVD to Theodore Debs

October 18, 1921
[Atlanta, Georgia]

Dear Theo:

Two very fine articles in the *Socialist World* for *September* you should not fail to read. This copy chanced to come to Joe C.,[1] the first for many months. The articles are "Mobs and Civil Rights" by Jimmy Oneal and "The Thin Red Line" by Bertha Hale White.[2] If you have not seen these articles pls. drop a line to Bertha H. W. and ask her to send you a copy. Pls. do not fail, and in writing her please tell her how thoroughly Joe C. and I have appreciated her article, what a fine bit of writing we think it is, and how heartily we congratulate her upon this excellent piece of literary work—Also when you write to Marguerite Prevey please call her attention to this article by Bertha Hale White and tell her that Joe Coldwell and I would like to know if she has seen it, and if not, we would like to have her read it.

AL, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Joseph Coldwell.
2. Oneal's "Mobs and Civil Rights" denounced "the mobbists who would suppress dissenting unions" in the name of "Americanism"; White's "The Thin Red Line" praised socialist leaders who had "embraced an unpopular cause" as young men and women and had remained true to the cause throughout their lives, often at great personal sacrifice.

Lincoln Phifer to EVD

October 19, 1921
Kansas City, Kansas

My Dear Comrade Debs:

Tonight's papers carry news of the death of Jake Sheppard[1] at Fort Scott. He was a strong, rare soul, and I have been unable to do

anything but think of him, of you and of the dear past and the hopeful future. You will therefore pardon another line from me.

How great you are, and what a great work you are doing now, without knowing that you are doing anything! Cheer, my comrade. My soul is with you. And thousands of souls and hearts, both of the carnate and decarnate, I feel, keep you comradeship.

I have thought for years that we were to go deeper in the valley than many suspected; but it is deep valleys that make high hills. The hills of God are surely ahead.

I am still on the Kansan, writing more than half the editorials and getting in as radical stuff as I can. The family is well, the children away—one teaching, the youngest at college. A letter from Eastwoods the other day tells how Frank is editing the anti-Catholic paper at Aurora, Mo., and the children are grown. Mrs. Fred Warren is in very poor health, and the Warrens are about to move to Chicago. Alex Howatt is fighting well—but of course is in prison.[2]

I enclose you a picture of my brother-in-law, DW Warren, with your picture in his arms. He wanted me to do so, and to tell you of his love and admiration of dear, good Comrade Debs.

I have a companion book to "Hamlet in Heaven" in received M.S. called, "Macbeth the Damned," but hardly think I will be able to get it published. I am still writing much "stuff," because I must, but do not know its fate.

Now, Comrade Debs, I know how you are situated and do not expect a reply to this. But I want you to know that while you are in prison I am not free. Yet I wish all men were as free of spirit as we are. I can't say half I would, but only ejaculate, Love! love!! cheer! cheer!!

Lincoln Phifer

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. As noted, Jake Sheppard was a Fort Scott, Kansas, attorney who served as counsel for the *Appeal to Reason* and was a founder of the People's College at Fort Scott.

2. As noted, Alexander Howat, head of the UMW in Kansas, was imprisoned for six months in 1921 for refusing to testify before the Kansas Industrial Relations Court.

Mrs. S. P. Solberg[1] to EVD

October 19, 1921
Pequot, Minnesota

Dearest Comrad Debs;—

I am going to send you a few words to show you I have not forgotten you.

No I think of you every day, and wonder how long the Harding "bunch" is going to keep you in prison, I wrote him a letter not long ago & told him what I and a great many more thot of him & the bunch he imploys. I told him that even Helen Keller who is stone blind could see enought to see that you should not be in jale; I also told him in my mind you were the greatest man since Lincoln, but I amagin he did not fancy such talk, but I do not care I will write again & say more then that, I wrote to our congressman & he was sick in a hospital so his assistance said, but he stated that Mr Knutson[2] had given the subject of granting pardon to Political prisoners a great deal of study next time I write I shall ask them if they spend any time studying how many millionars the worlds war created. I do think they aughto study that a little. How are you getting on? it sure takes Iron nervs to put up with all you have gone through with but I see better days ahead with the Lords help I see Victory so brace up and look ahead & upward you know you are inocent and we dont care what the bunch in washington think. you can not much blame them we must blame the very foolish ones that vote for them and there sure was a great many of them last Election, here Hoping you will soon be released I see by the paper yesterday that the reason they had you come to washington was to make you promise all kinds of things that you would quit the Socialist party etc but you wont go back on us will you 'Gean? I must write to Mrs. Debs too I wish I was near her so I could go & see her once in a while but I will write to her and try to cheer her up a bit, had a letter from F P OHair and see by it that Kate OHair has been to see her and that pleased me very much The crops were not good this year but it seems that the produce is cheaper than ever, we had 10 acors of potatoes & they say the crop is short all over, and the market price here is $100, per 100 lbs. some Harding price isen't it, Harding & hard times, as Upton Sinclair says. I hope your well & not be too home sick & we will all do what we can with love & best wishes from us all

I remain
Mrs S. P. Solberg

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. The Brainerd, Minnesota, city directory for 1926 lists Hannah Solberg as the wife of Sigvard P. Solberg, who worked in the Brainerd dairy. In her letter to Theodore Debs (November 5, 1926), written at the time of Debs's death, Hannah Solberg explained that she and her husband had "moved off the farm at Pequot to Brainerd." InTI, Debs Collection.

2. Harold Knutson (1880-1953) was a Minnesota congressman from 1917 to 1949, a leader of the conservative midwestern isolationist wing of the Republican party, and one of the party's most persistent critics of the federal government's policies during

the New Deal–World War II period. Knutson was one of fifty congressmen who voted against America's war declaration in 1917.

Theodore Debs to EVD

[October] 20, [1921]
Terre Haute, Indiana

Dearest Pard:—

Enclosed letter from our dear old friend Shedd;[1] also a poem of Holmes which appears this issue of The Nation.[2]

Nothing more in the way of mail since receiving the last two packages, 7 & 8. Beautiful days but too busy to get out in the sunshine.

Love & Kisses
Theodore

[EVD note to Theodore Debs]

No poem enclosed.

The packet containing this goes to the Warden's office Friday morning 28th. Pls. let me know when you receive it.

Love & kisses to you & Gertrude and Marguerite.

[Additional EVD note to Theodore Debs]

My dearest Theo— Thursday 27th

This note of yours with Kendrick Shedd enclosure came this evening. I read Kendrick's letter with full appreciation. He's a fine soul and always in the best of spirits. You speak of sending a poem by Dr. Holmes. The censor took it out. I suppose it is the same poem Dr. Holmes himself sent in his letter which also was taken out by the censor. I have no idea what the poem was about. Please save it for me. It would be too bad, wouldn't it, if such things were allowed to reach me! Everything of that kind is taken out of letters but it will not be so much longer with my mail for I shall be out of here in a few days, and I have a clear recollection of it all. I see also that the mail continues to be held up. Well, we can stand it a few days longer. I am glad to know all these things by experience for I shall make them all serve some good purpose before I am through.

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Kendrick Shedd.

2. John Haynes Holmes's poem "Good Men" (*Nation,* October 26, 1921) compared the "good men" who stood by and watched Christ's crucifixion with those who "much the same as you and I, / now see Debs in prison lie."

Scott Nearing to EVD

October 21, 1921
Monterey, Mexico

Dear Comrade,—

I have not written to you lately because I know how busy you must be reading letters.

For the past few weeks I have been traveling (& talking) in the United States & Mexico.

Everywhere you have friends—hosts of friends & everywhere they are eagerly anticipating your release.

When you do come out of prison you will have the largest personal following of any one in the radical movement of the United States.

You are doubtless familiar with the way in which the movement has split and dwindled—S.P. perhaps 8,000 members;[1] S.L.P. perhaps 3,000 members; I.W.W.—very uncertain. Communists claim 17,000.

In every community that I visit there are men and women—particularly young ones—ready to join up with something.

The right note, sounded now, will command a following of tens of thousands.

Your moves, when you get out, will determine the actions of many of these earnest seekers after better things.

We all join in sending you greetings.

Scott Nearing.

[EVD note to Theodore Debs]

This kind letter from Scott Nearing is written from Monterey, Mexico. I guess you can't acknowledge it for there's no address. He's a fine, loyal comrade and leader, but I take it he's heart-sick over the split-ups which have reduced the movement to ridicule and contempt.

But there'll be a reaction & that's sure!

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. The *Socialist World* (June-July 1921) claimed that the "average membership [in the Socialist party] for the year ending May 31, 1921" was 21,288; the "average membership for the first five months in 1921" was 17,464. The number of speakers and organizers on the national party payroll had been reduced to three.

Gertrude Latimer[1] to EVD

October 22, 1921
Lawrence, Massachusetts

Dearest Comrade:

Winters approaching fast for its very cold now already and almost all the leaves have fallen off the trees. I have jolliest times in winter for we go skating and coasting I hope the snow will fall heavy when it does snow.

But it will be a bad winter if a railroad strike comes and all mills will be closed up. I dont like the world now-a-days for always conditions seem to get poorer, so many people out of work and some have many children.

I wish all the people could live nicely along then the world would be happier, but I dont know if they ever will.

I read a very interesting piece of news in the paper that was that John D. Rockefeller gave a little girl twenty cents. It is funny when some Rockefeller or Vanderbilt gives few pennies it is always in the paper but if a workingman or anyone else gives or does anything it is never put in the paper. I am already almost tired of reading the evening paper for it is the same old story again about Rockefeller and lies against some workman.

I hope that when Im grown up times will be better.

I have to help mother today for she is tired, of weaving for eight hours everyday. When she comes home she almost always so very tired that she hasn't anytime to be enjoying, saturdays and sundays she has to look for things for next week and all time it seems as she has to labor all the time.

In school the teacher always tells what a good country America is but to me, America hasnt proved to be good so far, I dont think many people like the actions of this country

Oh the weather is beautiful today it is so frisky and cold I think I am going to take a long walk today for the weather is so tempting.

It is time for my mother to come home from the mill so I will close

Lovingly yours
Gertrude Latimer

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Debs's schoolgirl correspondent from Fitchburg, Massachusetts, Gertrude Laitinen, had moved to Lawrence and had anglicized the spelling of her last name.

Katherine Metzel Debs to Kate Richards O'Hare

October 29, 1921
Terre Haute, Indiana

Dear Comrade O'Hare:

Your very kind communication of the 22" inst. has been with me for some days and would certainly have had earlier attention but for the fact that I have been ill and as a consequence many things of more or less importance have been painfully neglected.

I have read your letter carefully and beg to assure you that I fully appreciate your fine, beautiful spirit, your greatness of heart and soul, and the generous and unselfish motive that prompts and inspires your every act.

Since the visit of Mr. O'Hare to this city several days ago I have given the text of our conversation, with which your letter in part deals, most careful consideration but my opinion in the matter, as stated to him on that occasion, remains unchanged. It is a most unfortunite situation and one which I deplore from every point of view.

When this matter was presented to me I had no idea that it was to carry anything that would in the most remote way suggest a financial return for my benefit or I would have discouraged that part of the plan or program without a moment's hesitation. I am sorry, very sorry that a suggestion along this line was not forthcoming so that the situation now at hand might have been averted.

There are obvious reasons why I could not with the best of will autograph the many receipts. In the first place, I am not well and it would simply be a physical impossibility; there are home duties, the care of mother, and the daily demand to meet and under these conditions you can readily understand that my hands are already full to overflowing.

To the good comrades who were moved and responded in such a magnanimous [manner] to the statement of the Rip-Saw and sent remittances to me direct, I have written letters of explanation, thanks and appreciation and returned their money.[1]

I very much enjoyed meeting Comrade O'Hare on his visit here, though I know I presented a sorry spectacle as I was very miserable on that day and barely able to be about. I hope we may all meet some day under more auspicious circumstances and under brighter and happier skies.

With greetings of love to you and all your family and thanking

you with a full heart for your words of personal kindness and encouragement and with all good wishes I am,

Fraternally yours,
Katherine M. Debs.

Have just received the pictures. They are *perfectly lovely, Fine!* Thanks.

ALS, MoH, O'Hare Papers.

1. As noted, Frank and Kate O'Hare had launched in the *Rip-Saw* a Katherine Debs Testimonial Fund.

Theodore Debs to Albert M. Todd

October 29, 1921
Terre Haute, Indiana

Dear Comrade:—

Your fine, beautiful letter of the 24th. inst. with check for $200.,[1] intended for Gene upon his liberation from prison, is received. I beg you to believe that I am touched, deeply touched, as Gene will be, when he learns of this most generous expression of your esteem and love; and I venture to say that as he holds your letter in his hands, in which there is the warmth of your own great heart and soul, the mist will come to his eyes. He will regret, as do I, that he cannot write you in person and say to you the things with which all his sensibilities will throb in loving appreciation.

We wish you to know, dear comrade, that we understand fully your kindness, your generosity and the loving spirit that prompted this offering, which we are herewith returning, the purity of your motive and tenderness of purpose and we assure you that your thoughtfulness, the fine and generous spirit of you, is worth a million and more to us. Let me thank you, a thousand times over, for Gene, for myself, and for us all. We shall hold you always in the most grateful remembrance.

We have no assurance as to when or whether Gene is to be liberated, other than what the press has given out from time to time. Nothing of a definite nature has come to us—and, besides, we have lost all confidence in anything coming from Washington from whatever source. In prison, all of Gene's wants, those permitted under the rules, are provided for and when he is released, if he should be, he hopes to get things going again.

It is with great pleasure that I am sending your letter to Gene and we shall hope, ardently hope, that when the light of the sun again falls on him outside of the cold, cheerless, grey walls he may look into your face, and as he holds your warm hand, he may have the pleasure of telling you in person how much your good will, confidence and devotion meant to him in prison—and still means.

With grateful heart and wishing you well in all ways I am

Fraternally yours,
[Theodore Debs]

TLc, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. In his letter to Theodore Debs of October 24, 1921, Todd wrote that when Debs "reaches home he may find use for a little money in providing for some things which may add to his happiness." He added that since he was known as a " 'capitalist,' " he would "not make public the fact that I am sending this check." InTI, Debs Collection.

George Andrews[1] to EVD

October 30, 1921
Ryan, Oklahoma

Dear Comrade

I am collecting pictures of your namesakes, They are to be placed in one large album and presented to you at some convenient time in the future.

You no doubt would be surprised to know that you have enuf namesakes in Oklahoma alone that their pictures would fill an ordinary album.

Your namesakes that I have recieved the photos from range in age from fifteen years down to four months, and sixty per of them have been named for you since your imprisonment.

I will not ask you to write me because I know your dear ones at home should claim and recieve the greater share of your correspondence, however should it be posible for you to do so I would request a message from you to your thousands of namesakes over the land, one letter to me will be transmitted to all of them.

Trusting you are in the best of health, and good spirrit

I am Your Comrade
George. Andrews
Ryan R#2
Okla

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. George Andrews was a Texas socialist who attempted without success before World War I to organize an industrial union of the unskilled trackmen of all races on the Texas railroads. A photograph of Miss Eugene Victor Debs Andrews, his daughter, is in InTI, Debs Collection.

Rose Zimmerman to EVD

October 30, 1921
New York City

My dear Grandfather Eugene Debs,

One of your many sons, my father, was one of the first twenty-eight members of the Socialist party in New York City. All though dear daddy is dead his ideas live in us, his wife and three children, to-day. You will ask why? Because his ideas were yours.

My dear grandfather, of all the wishes mine will be the simplest, but it comes from the deepest part of my heart to my dear grandfather. Long may he live in the hearts of men. Never to be forgotten as long as mankind exists.

Your loving granddaughter,
Rose Zimmerman, Age 13.

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

Albert M. Todd to Theodore Debs

October 31, 1921
Kalamazoo, Michigan

Dear Comrade:—

It is with much happiness that I have just received your kind letter of the 29th expressing again your feelings of comradeship and your appreciation and understanding of the motive, which moved me to send the check in my last letter, which although you generously expressed your appreciation, you feel that you cannot accept.

I can readily understand how you would feel a great delicacy in accepting, and I should not have dared to have sent you the check were it not that when I disclosed to you my interest in your brother and the great work he had done for humanity, and my interests for many years in related movements, and that I did not consider it a gift but a debt which I owed as a citizen, you would feel that it was

fully right to accept it. Yet as you have thought it best to return the check I can simply say that it would be an added proof, if one were needed, that you and "Brother Gene" have placed your lives upon a level of much higher ethics than is possessed even by many of our noblest citizens, so you have again proved a spirit and practice of unselfishness which is most rare indeed to find.

I note that when you wrote you had not received definite information as to when your brother will be released; but I saw a press report that day or yesterday that his release would probably occur very promptly, which I trust will be the case; and I can imagine how glad his family and neighbors will be to welcome him to his home, as countless thousands have already welcomed him to their hearts.

I do not wish to impose upon you by requiring that you write me often, since you doubtless have a very large correspondence, and will only say that when your convenience and pleasure permits I shall be more than glad to hear from you.

Meantime with every kind wish to your brother, yourself, and your respective families, I am

Fraternally yours,
A. M. Todd

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

Edward F. Cassidy[1] to EVD

November 5, 1921
New York City

Dear Comrade Debs:

The impulse comes to me at this moment to sit down and mail you a word of congratulations on the anniversary of your birthday. Your present situation is one in which at different periods of the worlds history the noblest souls of the race have found themselves. You can take solace in the fact that at this moment a great multitude of men and women feel an admiration {that can never die} for you and the cause you suffer for.

It will cheer you to know that after 22 months of battle with Tammany Hall Comrade Lee[2] and myself were seated as Aldermen of the City of New York on last Thursday. With the assistance of Comrade Hillquit and the Unions Tammany was at last brought to its knees and was forced to give up the stolen goods.

When we started the fight many said the task was hopeless but we emerge victorious.

Edw. F. Cassidy
Socialist Alderman
New York City

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Edward F. Cassidy (1868-1937) joined the Socialist party in New York in 1901 and was the party's candidate for mayor of New York City in 1909 and for other state and local offices before World War I. In 1919 he was defeated by 37 votes by a Tammany candidate for alderman in New York City and with Morris Hillquit as his attorney secured a court-ordered recount of the votes. Finally, in 1921, with only a few months left in his term, he was declared a winner of the alderman's seat by 137 votes. Cassidy was the Socialist party candidate for governor of New York in 1922 and for many years a vice-president of the International Typographical Union in New York City. *New York Times*, November 20, 1937.

2. Like Cassidy, Algernon Lee "lost" the 1919 election by a narrow margin, joined in the court cases seeking a recount, and won his seat following the recount. *New Day*, October 29, 1921.

T. T. Ritter to EVD

November 7, 1921
Milton, Pennsylvania

My dearest Comrade

Long ago have I intended to write you, and in so doing try to convey to you a word of comfort and of cheer. My heart so often aches as I think of the cruel injustice which has taken you from your home and placed you behind prison bars, But—oh how I have admired you for being steadfast [and] unmoveable in the principle for which you stand. And I am not able to express to you what an inspiration your life your words and deeds have been to me ever since I climbed up over the Footlights to get upon the Stage in the Auditorium in Spokane Wash, in 1904 about 21 years ago. And at that time as you grasped my hand you settled for all time the principles of the Socialist movement for me. Since that I have studdied its principles and logic and find it true. And then again in San Francisco in {the spring} [of] 1915 It was my pleasure to listen to you. Also the same year in the Fall at Williamsport Pa

I am a Carpenter and a Bachelor, Age 50 yrs, and travel around quite a lot I only have told this to show what has established my Love and Admiration for you. Have just received the November Rip

Saw No 13, I prize it very highly and shall keep this special No of you & Mrs. Debs.[1]

Dear Comrade how gladly would I take your place if by so doing they would release you. Forgive me if I tell you that about a year ago I wrote a letter to The Appeal[2] and at the same time addressing it to president Wilson & Attorney general Palmer offering to take your place in prison and serve to the end the unexpired time of your term by so doing they would release you.

And for that I continue to stand

And this is only what you are doing now for us as a Laboring Class.

Hoping & trusting for your early release.

And with all Love and admiration I am sincerely your Brother & Comrade

T. T. Ritter
130 Mahoning st
Milton Pa

P.S. How I would like a word from you if you have time

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. The entire November 1921 issue of the *Rip-Saw* was "devoted to the story of the life and work of Katherine and Eugene V. Debs" and written by Kate Richards O'Hare.

2. See Upton Sinclair to Theodore Debs, November 13, 1920. InTI, Debs Collection.

John Haynes Holmes to Theodore Debs

November 10, 1921
New York City

Dear Mr. Debs:

It is a pleasure to hear from you and I am profoundly grateful if any little thing that I have done for your brother has brought him comfort and courage. I am outraged just as you are by the contemptible rulings that make it impossible for a prisoner to receive such a thing as my little poem in The Nation. I hope that your bit of strategy will carry it through the lines.

I am sending you under another cover two copies of a weekly paper of mine which contain editorial utterances on the question of amnesty. I sometimes get discouraged at the situation but persistent hammering may accomplish something in the end. In the next issue of this paper I have an editorial on the recent action of the American Legion in

calling for the continued imprisonment of the so-called political prisoners.[1]

With sincerest regards, I remain

Very truly yours,
John Haynes Holmes

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. In his weekly paper *Unity* (November 17, 1921), Holmes wrote that the American Legion's demand "for the continued imprisonment of Eugene V. Debs . . . proves that if ever there was a crowd of moral thugs, this is it."

Andrew C. Cooper, John M. [Levitt], and Carl Parsons[1] to EVD

November 15, 1921
Washington, D.C.

EUGENE V DEBS

THE UNDERSIGNED OFFICERS OF THE WORLD WAR VETERANS[2] {WHO} ARE HERE IN WASHINGTON[3] TO HONOR OUR UNKNOWN COMRADE ON ARMISTICE DAY GREET YOU AS THE BEST KNOWN OF THE BAND OF 140 POLITICAL PRISONERS IN FEDERAL PRISONS FOR OPPOSING THE WAR. YOU WERE INSPIRED BY THE SAME IDEALS AS WE WHO FOUGHT. WE DIFFERED ONLY IN THE MEANS OF ACHIEVING THOSE IDEALS. WE RESPECT YOUR VIEWS AND YOUR COURAGE. WE DEMAND FOR YOU THE SAME FREEDOM OF OPINION WHICH WE ENJOY OURSELVES. BELIEVING THAT WE HAVE APPEALED TO THE PRESIDENT TO GRANT A GENERAL AMNESTY TO ALL SUCH PRISONERS. OUR APPEAL TO THE PRESIDENT HAS BEEN ENDORSED IN A MEMORIAL BY HOLDERS OF THE CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR. WE ASSURE YOU THAT THE HEARTS OF THE MEN WHO FOUGHT FOR AMERICAN DEMOCRATIC IDEALS ARE WITH YOU. YOUR RELEASE AND THAT OF OTHER PRISONERS WILL MARK THE RECOGNITION OF THOSE PRINCIPLES ON WHICH OUR COUNTRY'S INSTITUTIONS REST.

ANDREW G COOPER
NATIONAL CHAIRMAN
JOHN M LEVITT
EASTERN DIVISION CHAIRMAN
CARL PARSONS
MINNESOTA STATE CHAIRMAN

Telegram, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. The memorial to the president signed by Cooper, Levitt, and Parsons was published in *Socialist World*, November 1921.

2. The World War Veterans was one of several groups that competed with the American Legion for membership at the end of the war. It claimed to represent the common soldier, in contrast to the American Legion, which was viewed as being dominated by the "officer class."

3. An account of the presentation of their petition to Harding on November 14, 1921, is in the *New York Times*, November 15, 1921.

EVD to Theodore Debs

[November 15, 1921]
[Atlanta, Georgia]

The packet went forward this morning and also the letter. May they both be with you on time. The morning paper contains the Proclamation.[1] Three years after *the war is ended the war is ended* and the people are supposed to know that *the war is over.* It will be startling news to them and we may well be alarmed about the possible effect upon their nerves. The same report also declares that the proclamations in regard to Austria and Hungary will be issued in a few days. The treaties of peace with Haiti, San Domingo and West Virginia, I suppose, are still to be heard from. In connection with the proclamation there appears a statement by Daughterty in which he says for about the thirty-ninth time in the last seven months, if my count is correct, that he may have some changes to make in the "phraseology" before submitting his recommendations. Oh you "phraseology!" Also Taft, Wall street et al! He is the greatest phrasologizer in captivity. The wee bit of real news is the Call on the President by the representatives of the rank and file of the soldiers who did the actual fighting and had honor medals to show for it (as distinguished from the jackanaper and man milliners in gold lace and silk stockings—the strutting Prussianized officers who never smelled smoke—for whose pomp and glory, and incidentally to kidnap women, to tar and feather an objectional speaker, and serve as strike-breakers, the American Legion was organized and financed by the Wall Street brigands and profiteers) to demand in behalf of the American soldiers the liberation of the war prisoners, and they put their demand upon the ground that as one of them I opposed the war for the same reasons that they went into war. These men spoke for the soldiers who did the fighting, just as the American Legion spoke for the officers, the tools of Wall street, who remained safely in the rear and came back to strut about in military flammery and exploit their "patriotism." I know that a ma-

jority of the rank and file soldiers are my friends and when I get out I am going to put it to the test and demonstrate it to Wall street and its fawning hirelings. One of every 50 soldiers that went to France volunteered. 49 out of every 50 were drafted, taken by the neck and forced to go there, while more than two thirds of all who were drafted applied for exemption as a last hope of escape, and this is the great American army that fought for the "liberation" of the world. They have yet to fight for their own liberation from slavery.

AL, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. As noted, President Harding issued the proclamation formally ending the war with Germany on November 15, 1921.

[Bertha Hale White] to EVD

November 16, 1921
Washington, D.C.

Dear Comrade Debs:

Through the kindness of your brother, I have received your recent deeply appreciated message. It was forwarded to me here where I am doing what I can to further the work of amnesty,[1] and I do not need to tell you, I think, that a word from your dear self is enough to carry me through the countless difficulties of a day's work.

I meant to write you on your birthday. Instead I was on my way to Washington, but every thought and every aspiration I had was a message to you. I am glad I am here. I do not know how much I can advance the cause, but striving to do something is at least a comfort to me. All these weary, weary days that have run into years, the thought of you has been a poignant minor strain in the sadly hushed music of life, and the knowledge of your heroic courage has been a thread of gold through the fabric of my existence.

I have seen many people since coming here, and the almost universal opinion seems to be that amnesty will not be delayed much longer. God knows I pray it may be so. This work is not hard, dear Comrade. It is easy to get a hearing, whether it accomplishes much or not, and I am proud, proud, proud to say I am here in your interest and in behalf of all others who are suffering as you are suffering. I know that in all this city there is none with a cause more noble, or one that should receive such instant consideration. If those I meet do not know this they are to be pitied.

What can I say to you, dear Gene Debs. I, just a humble worker

in the cause you have glorified! Words are so inadequate. Through all the history of humanity the most glorious pages are of heroic souls who have suffered for the commonweal. In the Ages to come, a remade world will make of the heap of stone that surrounds you its holiest altar.

Your devoted comrade,
[Bertha Hale White]

TLc, NcD, Socialist party Papers.

1. Bertha Hale White headed the Socialist party's amnesty committee in Washington. On December 19, 1921, she presented to President Harding a petition "signed by more than 30,000 citizens of Terre Haute" asking for Debs's release "as a Christmas gift to the nation." An account of the committee's work is in "Amnesty Work of the Socialist Party," *Socialist World*, June 1922.

Roger N. Baldwin to EVD

November 21, 1921
New York City

My dear Gene Debs:

You will have seen by this time the efforts which we[1] are making in conjunction with the World War Veterans to put the amnesty issue effectively before the country through demonstrations at Washington. We felt that the time had come to get out of the private conferences with the president and the attorney-general into the larger field of public opinion, in order to make clear to the administration the extent of the sentiment for doing the fair thing now by granting a general amnesty in all war cases. With some of the features of the work the Socialist Party organization is not yet in full accord, but I think they will see the thing shortly as we do and come in on it.

We raise only the issue of a general amnesty without reference to any particular persons.[2] I know that is the stand that you have always taken and would want us to take. I am writing just to give you this essential point and to tell you, who are so deeply interested from every standpoint, that we will conduct this task with the utmost discretion and energy to a final success.

With warmest regards and our devoted admiration,

Always sincerely yours,
Roger Baldwin

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. The American Civil Liberties Union.

2. The *New York Times,* November 19, 1921, described the delegation's meeting with Harding and noted that "the Debs case was not mentioned directly by any of the delegation's spokesmen, but in a letter left with the President it was asserted that Debs had no wish to receive executive clemency that would not be accorded to others convicted under the same wartime laws."

EVD to Theodore Debs

ca. November 21, 1921
[Atlanta, Georgia]

It is now *certain* that we are going out and that *soon.* This is the very first time *I believed it without a doubt.* We are going out, not by grace of the politicians—their Masters would not allow them to exhibit such decency—*but in spite of them.* The women and the soldiers at the gate will make them quake in their stolen livery. Oh, the cowardice, the crookedness and contemptibility of the capitalist *political puppet!*

When the women picketed at Washington for suffrage the powers that be (of reaction and darkness) had them insulted by blackguards, assaulted by brutes, and their banners torn from their hands by toughs, thugs, bar room loafers and plug-uglies. In the present picketing crusade[1] there marches behind each woman a husky soldier or marine. They are more effective than before and they are now not insulted or assaulted. Wise Women! And Glory Be!!

AL, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. The *New York Times,* November 19, 1921, reported that "some Administration sources" believed that the "pickets . . . bearing placards favoring a general amnesty . . . served more to injure than to attract sympathy for their cause." The pickets included the World War Veterans and their wives and other women.

Bertha Hale White to EVD

November 24, 1921
Washington, D.C.

EUGENE V DEBS

THE WORLD WAR VETERANS THROUGH THEIR REPRESENTATIVE IN WASHINGTON CARL PARSONS REQUEST ME TO CONVEY TO YOU THEIR

GREETINGS FOR THANKSGIVING THEY EARNESTLY ASK THAT YOU GRANT THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THEIR ORGANIZATION AN INTERVIEW IF POSSIBLE NEXT SUNDAY OR AS SOON THEREAFTER AS MAY BE ARRANGED THEY ARE WIRING THE WARDEN

BERTHA HALE WHITE
BELLEVUE HOTEL

Telegram, InTI, Debs Collection.

Joseph E. Cohen to EVD

December 1, 1921
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Dear Gene:

Your gracious rememberance[1] of me was more than rosemary, and I wish only that I could feel in the slightest worthy of your beautiful thoughts, & We know all too well it is the outpouring of your magnanimous spirit, and can accept it as a kindly benediction.

To be sure the storm clouds are still with us & The false gods are still at odds and the rumbling of their distracted passions is tearing the nations to pieces, while their ambassadors in puppet conclave talk big and do little for world amity.[2]

But certain is it that the forces of labor everywhere are coming to see that only in their own will and might is there the possibility of the world being rescued from the awful slaughter of civilization such as we already witnessed and the dire consequences which are yet strewing the countrie's with wreckage.

So our hearts overflow with promise for the future, just as they do into affection for you.

As ever, yours,
Jos. E. Cohen

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Theodore Debs wrote to Cohen on November 21, 1921, to thank him for remembering Debs's birthday and to praise his splendid work on behalf of the striking Philadelphia typographical workers' union. InTI, Debs Collection.

2. The Washington Naval Conference opened on November 12, 1921, and was in session for three months.

EVD to Mabel Dunlap Curry?

December 6, 1921
Atlanta, Georgia

My dear Comrade, Tuesday 6th

This is the extract from Tumulty's "Woodrow Wilson"[1] which gives his, Wilson's, reasons for refusing my release. They are indeed brilliant reasons for the hero of peace who "kept us out of war." I am willing to believe he can not look the workers in the face whose sons he sent to slaughter, and God mercifully spared him the ordeal by a paralyzing stroke.[2]

Please send the Tumulty account to Otto B.[3] and ask him to give it to our press for reproduction and comment. I am sure our editors will be held in proper restraint by the fact that they are dealing with a cadaver—a corpse still kept twitching by malice, hate and revenge on those who, unlike himself, did not sell out their country and deliver its people to have their throats cut and their bodies ripped open at the shambles for the profit and glory of Woodrow Wilson's Masters, the Profiteers.

AL, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Joseph Patrick Tumulty (1879-1954) was a prominent New Jersey Democrat who served as Woodrow Wilson's secretary during Wilson's governorship of New Jersey and two-term presidency. In his *Woodrow Wilson as I Knew Him* (1921), Tumulty recalled that "on the day that the recommendation for [Debs's] pardon arrived at the White House [Wilson] looked it over and examined it carefully, and said: 'I will never consent to the pardon of this man. . . . This man was a traitor to his country and he will never be pardoned during my administration.' " The typed extract from the *Atlanta Journal*, dated December 5, 1921, is in the Debs Collection at Indiana State University.

2. On a speaking tour undertaken to build public support for the Treaty of Versailles, Wilson suffered a paralytic stroke at Pueblo, Colorado, on September 25, 1919. Thereafter he lived in a sickroom in the White House, emerging occasionally for recreation or purely formal tasks; he was largely isolated from political activity.

3. Otto Branstetter, national secretary of the Socialist party.

Katherine Metzel Debs to Kate Richards O'Hare

December 7, 1921
Terre Haute, Indiana

Dear Comrade O'Hare:

Had a nice visit last eve from Comrade Brenstetter who was on his way home from Atlanta. His reports are all very favorable and I

was so pleased to have them. This morning I had Gene's usual weekly letter in which he seems to be very much exercised over the idea of an electric [car] you mention in your K.D. article.[1] In commenting on the edition he says, "Kate O'Hare wrote beautifully and brilliantly. She made a great story and a wonderful tribute. It is really *literature* Her story is written in generous, loving, great-hearted spirit and with rare sympathy and understanding and you and I in particular may well be proud and grateful for it. It is a masterly piece of writing and a graceful and noble tribute. But you *must not* let her get you an electric car."

So hear what the Great Mogul says, and don't dare send me a car. I never took that seriously, I thought you said it jokingly. But I could not accept a car.

Trust you and the children and your dear mate are all well.

Lovingly
Katherine M. Debs.

ALS, MoH, O'Hare Papers.

1. In one of the articles in the Debs Issue of *Rip-Saw* (November 1921), O'Hare wrote that she was "determined that somehow, by some hook or crook, [she was] going to get a little electric car that Katherine could drive, so she and her old, blind mother can go out into the sunshine and beauty of God's outdoors."

Katherine Metzel Debs to Kate Richards O'Hare

December 10, 1921
Terre Haute, Indiana

Dear Mrs. O'Hare:

Since your pleasant visit I have again reviewed my position relative to accepting or participating in any plan that contemplates making me a financial benefactor but I have not changed my opinion one iota; and under *no* circumstances can I accept any part of the proceeds of the special edition nor do I feel under the circumstances that I should in any way dictate or even suggest what disposition should be made of this fund.

You must understand that I knew absolutely nothing of this proposed generosity on your part until after the country had been circularized and an edition of the Rip-Saw containing the announcement had been placed in the mails. Had I been consulted in the matter, I *never* would have given my consent to any such plan. I had been called on before but promptly declined the use of my name for any such

purposes. I have reasons of my own for not wishing to participate in the distribution of such a fund and I am there fore returning the check[1] you left during your visit here—Kindly as I feel to you personally and grateful as I am for your kindness I am compelled to hold to the position I have held from the very beginning.

With kindest regards to you and your family, I remain,

Yours fraternally
Katherine M. Debs[2]

ALS, MoH, O'Hare Papers.

1. In the December 1921 issue of the *Rip-Saw,* O'Hare announced that "a bank draft for a neat sum will go to Mrs. Debs" but did not specify the amount of the draft.

2. This letter was published in the January 1922 issue of the *Rip-Saw,* and O'Hare reported that there was "nothing left to do but return to the comrades" the money collected for Katherine Debs.

A. C. Matthews to Theodore Debs

December 11, 1921
Gunnison, Colorado

Dear Comrade—

I am writing you in hope that this letter may reach you in time to save our Gene's life.

I see him walking down the steps of Atlanta prison and as he reaches the side walk at street (in shadow of a large tree) about 9:30 P.M. a Klu Klux Klanner[1] or Knight of Columbus[2] who has been hired for the job—shoots him down.

Since reading the under handed hypocracy of the Armiment Confrence[3]—which was nothing in God's world but to find out how China was hooked up with Russia—I cannot persuade myself that such hyenas are going to allow Eugene V. Debs to reach home safely.

Hire at least 100 well armed determined socialists to be at the Atlanta prison as a body guard for our Gene and let the socialist party pay them out of the dollars the comrades are sending as a xmas gift.

Yours for Freedom
A. C. Matthews

c/o La Veta Hotel.

I would be willing to give 10 years of my life to be there.

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. The nativist secret society that was founded in Georgia in 1915 and spread to the North and Middle West in the post–World War I period was dedicated to hostility to blacks, Catholics, Jews, immigrants, and nonconformist groups. Eventually claiming a membership of 4,000,000, the Klan was especially powerful in Indiana, where, for a time, it dominated state and local politics.

2. An American Roman Catholic social and fraternal organization that, as noted, had made opposition to socialism an important part of its civic-loyalty program.

3. Probably the Washington Naval Conference, to which the Soviet Union was not invited.

EVD to Theodore Debs?

December 15, 1921
Atlanta, Georgia

Leaf from a sprig of holly handed me with his love and regret that it was all he had to give, by a fellow-prisoner from Galveston, Texas; who was a member of the American Railway Union, and local leader in the railway strike of 1894. He was sent to jail for six months for cutting a Pullman car from a train in obedience to the A.R.U. Boycott.

We are still pals! We were in the strike together 27 years ago and we are now in the penitentiary together.

A sprig of God's holly from a human heart—a precious holiday gift indeed!

AL, InTI, Debs Collection.

EVD to Theodore Debs

December 19, 1921
Atlanta, Georgia

My darling Theodore—

The great government of which you are but a subject and I a more or less honored guest, has been magnanimous, and by its gracious favor one extra letter has been allowed, and it goes to you and dear Gertrude and sweet Marguerite with all the greetings of the season and all the love of my heart. It is highly possible that I may join you before the Yuletide sun has set, but I am not counting on it. Kate has given me full particulars in a letter just received of the Terre Haute amnesty petition, the good people who org'ned and helped to launch it, and the "patriots" who in the Christian spirit of their tribe

gave impetus to the enterprise by attempting in their characteristic manner to suppress it.[1] I appreciate it all, but if "mercy" is shown it will not be of the kind that is not "strained," but because Wall street has concluded that for purposes and ends of its own we traitors should now be treated with clemency (sic) and granted a pardon. It is too bad we can not express our gratitude and appreciation in repentance but I can assure them that we shall make up for it in some other way.

My beautiful old Pard, I shall never (this is a prison pen I'm writing with as well as in, and you'll allow accordingly) be able to tell you how grateful I shall {always} be to you and dear Gertrude and Marguerite for your loyal, steadfast, unflickering devotion from the very beginning and all through the struggle to the present moment. You have been everything to me and you have done everything for me, and the thought of you enriches my spirit and fills my heart with sweetness. You have not counted the cost and you have spared nothing. You never faltered a moment, and never lisped a complaining word. God bless and keep you! I have your blessed souls in my heart forever. And I want to thank you especially and love you with added love for your goodness and kindness to dear Mabel. Her letters are full of you. Not one tender, loving word or act has been lost on her. The true nobility of her soul responds to yours in all that is beautiful and divine, and in sweetest sympathy and understanding. How perfectly devoted, how marvellously courageous and self-sacrificing, and how utterly consecrated she has been to our cause! I can never repay her in the smallest measure. My love with all my heart to you and Gertrude and Marguerite! Yours, old pard, world without end

Eugene V. Debs
#9653

May the Christmas hours bring you peace and hope and joy. My heart will be with you and I shall share in all the happiness that comes to you. God bless you all & keep you as you are!

The miles may lie between but our hearts can never be divided. May joy and cheer come with the New Year!

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. The *Socialist World,* December 1921, reported that "35,000 signatures of Terre Haute citizens" had been gotten on "a special Christmas petition which is being taken to President Harding." The petition was signed by leading business and professional people in Terre Haute and by Terre Haute Mayor Charles R. Hunter. A booth covered with "Ireland Is Free Why Not Debs?" placards was set up in downtown Terre Haute as part of the campaign to secure petition signatures.

Bertha Hale White to Theodore Debs

December 20, 1921
[Washington, D.C.]

Dear Comrade Debs:

I do not have Comrade Martin's address, and do not know if he is in Terre Haute. So I am reporting to you on the reception of the petition, and hope you will inform those deeply interested.

The petition reached me on Saturday and I had the unexpected luck of securing prompt co-operation from Senator Watson[1] of Indiana. He arranged for its reception at the White House yesterday. However, I had to promise I would not attempt to review the arguments for amnesty, and it was a great surprise to me that I was enabled to hand the Terre Haute appeal to the President at all.

Mrs. La Follette, Mrs. Charles Edward Russell and I went to the White House at the appointed time. When we arrived we were surrounded by reporters. One of them told me he thought the best thing that had happened in the amnesty work was this appeal of Gene's townsmen. He thought the President was very glad to have it. Certainly he acted as though he was, although we got no indication of his intentions. Those with me expressed themselves as extremely gratified by its presentation and the cordial way in which it was accepted.

Everyone is expecting an announcement from the White House. To me the most encouraging thing is the very evident belief among the reporters that Comrade Debs and perhaps some others will be pardoned. They are not publishing any appeals for such action, but they are undoubtedly expecting it. Reporters keep asking me if I have any word. Oh I just feel I could not endure further disappointment. And if I feel like that, how must you and that dear wife feel? Will you express to Mrs. Debs my profound hope that her patient waiting is soon to end? I met her nearly ten years ago and have never forgotten her gracious and lovely [one word illegible].

I expect to go back to Chicago not later than Friday of this week. If only I can go with the great happiness of knowing Comrade Debs is at home!

Trusting this will be your happiest Christmas,

Fraternally yours,
[Bertha Hale White]

TLc, NcD, Socialist Party Papers.

1. James Eli Watson (1864-1948) was a Republican congressman from Indiana

from 1895 to 1897 and from 1899 to 1909 and United States senator from 1917 to 1933.

Theodore Debs to Gertrude Debs

December 22, 1921
Atlanta, Georgia

Dearest Pard:—

For two hours yesterday afternoon we had our arms about each other Gene and I. The Warden was very kind as was his son and all the prison attendants. Early in the morning David[1] phoned the Warden and made an engagement for 1 oclock. Gene knew nothing of my coming and it was not until he walked into the office and we rushed at each other did he know that I was within a thousand miles of Atlanta. He was delighted and we talked and laughed and were as silly over each other, I imagine, as kids.

Gene is with a heavy coat of tan, with clear eye, spirit untamed, but —— the days in prison have done their work. The purpose of his incarceration has been partly, if not wholly, accomplished; and Wilson and Harding can hold the flattering unctions to their piously (?) hypocritical souls that they are entitled to a very large degree of credit for the cruel and infamous part they have played in serving their dehumanized masters, the despoilers of the people.

Gene says he feels good and that he weighs 170. But there is a weakness in his voice that denotes the loss of vitality. How much recuperative power there is still available only time will tell.

When the Warden stepped from the office and left us alone Gene told us that he had just had a quarrel with a guard, a big burly brute that weighs 250. It appears that Gene had gone from one building to another, that is, he went over to where Joe Coldwell was, to get the Call,[2] without a permit—an infraction of the rules. The guard very insulting asked him his number and told him he should be promptly reported and punished. Gene gave his number and told him to go to {it} and that G—D—him he would see that his goose was properly cooked. It was [not] long before this guard returned trembling and told the Boss he would make no trouble. I guess he had been advised in the meantime to start nothing he could not finish.

This is the day Harding is to make his announcement[3] according to press reports.

Davy is fine and beautiful as any man I have ever met. High-minded, clean and true with every drop in his veins.

My love, dear pard, is ever with you.

With affection
Theodore

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. David Karsner.
2. *New York Call.*
3. Harding's announcement of Debs's release was made on December 23, 1921.

EVD to Katherine M. Debs

December 25, 1921
Atlanta, Georgia

KATHERINE M DEBS

MY DARLING KATE GREETINGS OF LOVE TO YOU AND DEAR SWEET MOTHER THE DAY HAS COME[1] AND OUR BLESSED COMMUNION IS NEAR A NECESSARY TRIP TO WASHINGTON[2] AND THEN HOME[3] TO YOU MY BELOVED WITH AN OVERFLOWING HEART I EMBRACE YOU AND GOD BLESS YOU

EUGENE V DEBS

Telegram, Eugene V. Debs Foundation, Debs Home, Katherine Debs Scrapbook No. 3.

1. Attorney General Daugherty's notice to Warden Dyche that "President has commuted sentence of Eugene V. Debs to expire Christmas Day, nineteen twenty-one" was dated December 24, 1921. Daugherty explained to Illinois Congressman Richard Yates, in a letter dated December 31, 1921, that "we thought it advisable to release Debs at this time because of a movement to make a martyr of him, which might have succeeded, had he remained in prison." Daugherty added his opinion that "anybody who listens to Debs' arguments now should know that they are listening to the arguments of a man who is not of sound mind." National Archives, Records of the Office of Pardon Attorney, Record Group 204. Daugherty told the press that Debs had come to Washington "of his own volition," but Debs insisted that he had come "at the request of the Attorney General" and cited as proof the fact that the train ticket given him on his release at Atlanta had a Washington destination. *Terre Haute Post*, December 27, 1921.

2. Debs met with both Attorney General Daugherty and President Harding on December 26, 1921.

3. Debs returned to Terre Haute, after a large demonstration in Indianapolis, on December 28, 1921. A crowd estimated at 25,000 and including leading socialist and labor leaders from throughout the country (and the mayor of Terre Haute), greeted

him at the station in Terre Haute and followed him to his home, where he made a brief speech before retiring. *Terre Haute Post*, December 29, 1921.

[Roger N. Baldwin] to EVD

December 29, 1921
New York City

My dear Gene Debs:

As I wired you at the Harrington Hotel[1] the other day, this organization[2] would be delighted to have you make under its auspices the tour you contemplate for the release of the political prisoners. We make this offer on the understanding that you would prefer a non-partisan agency in a non-partisan work.

We should be happy to have the whole matter arranged in accordance with your views of it, if you will indicate them either by letter or in person to one of our representatives whom we would be glad to send to you.

I hesitate to mention anything more specific until I know your views and plans. I know you are familiar in a general way with what we have been doing. We have a Washington office under competent management and we have attorneys and publicity men and other facilities necessary for doing a thorough and effective job. We shall wait until we hear from you before proceeding along the line of this plan, although of course, we shall keep up our general agitation for the release of the remaining prisoners.[3]

Warmest regards,

Sincerely yours,
[Roger Baldwin]

TLc, NjP, Mudd Library, ACLU Archives.

1. The crowd of visitors at the Harrington Hotel in Washington during Debs's stay there included Samuel Gompers.

2. The American Civil Liberties Union.

3. Twenty-three other prisoners, including Joseph Coldwell, were freed at the time of Debs's release; nearly 150 others, including a large number of the IWW members convicted in Chicago, remained in various state and federal prisons.

Theodore Debs to James Oneal

January 6, 1922
Terre Haute, Indiana

JAMES ONEAL

IN REPORT OF VISIT HERE[1] PLEASE DO NOT UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES QUOTE GENE ON ANY CONTROVERSIAL MATTER OR COMMIT HIM TO ANY PROPOSITION THAT MAY INCITE FURTHER DISPUTE AND WIDEN THE BREACH BETWEEN COMRADES TO DO SO WOULD AT ONCE INVOLVE HIM AT A TIME WHEN HE IS PHYSICALLY UNABLE TO DEFEND HIS POSITION NO POSSIBLE GOOD BUT HARM ONLY WOULD RESULT FROM SUCH PUBLICATION GENE WAS OF COURSE PERFECTLY FRANK IN WHAT HE HAD TO SAY UPON MOOTED QUESTIONS BUT THIS WAS ONLY FOR THE PERSONAL UNDERSTANDING OF THE COMMITTEE AND NOT FOR PUBLICATION BETTER NO STORY AT ALL THAN ONE THAT WOULD ADD TO THE PRESENT COMPLICATED SITUATION WHEN GENE HAS HAD SUFFICIENT TIME TO RECUPERATE IT WILL BE DIFFERENT AND HE CAN THEN MAKE HIS POSITION CLEAR THIS WILL TAKE SOME TIME HE HAS BEEN WEAKENED BY LONG CONFINEMENT AND HIS PHYSICIAN STATES EMPHATICALLY THAT IF HE IS EVER TO CONTINUE HIS WORK HE MUST HAVE A CONSIDERABLE PERIOD OF REST AND QUIET AND FREEDOM FROM ALL EXCITING CIRCUMSTANCES[2] YOU CAN ENLARGE UPON GENES INSISTENCE THAT AMNESTY FOR ALL POLITICALS BE PROSECUTED WITH INCREASING VIGOR AND THAT THE WORK OF RELIEVING THE RUSSIAN FAMINE RECEIVE THE UNITED AND UNWAVERING SUPPORT OF ALL OUR COMRADES AND SYMPATHIZERS THESE QUESTIONS LIE NEAREST HIS HEART AT THIS TIME[3]

THEO DEBS.

Telegram, NNU Tam, Debs Collection.

1. On January 2, 1922, a Socialist party committee composed of Oneal, Otto Branstetter, William H. Henry, and Oliver C. Wilson met with Debs in Terre Haute. *Socialist World,* January 1922.

2. In "About Gene Debs" (*New York Call,* January 28, 1922), Theodore Debs reported in some detail on Debs's physical condition and declared that "the state of Gene's health will not permit him to take an active part in the work of the movement for some time to come."

3. Two of Debs's first published statements following his release dealt with amnesty for all politicals (*Socialist World,* January 1922) and Russian famine relief (*New Day,* April 1922).

Theodore Debs to Roger N. Baldwin

January 14, 1922
Terre Haute, Indiana

Dear Roger Baldwin:—

Your letters of the 29th. ult. and 10th. inst.[1] were duly received. Please pardon our delay. We have been literally flooded and with our limited facilities cannot begin to answer the thousands of letters that have been pouring in from almost everywhere. Gene has been ill and his doctor has emphatically told him that he must have a considerable period of rest and quiet if he is ever to resume his activities. The last four years were a continuous battle for him, both inside and outside the prison and his bodily strength has suffered more than he realized and he has got to keep free from excitement long enough to recuperate and then he will be ready for action again and you may be sure that he will lose no time about it. Gene explained this fully {to} Comrade Gartz yesterday who will report to you. Gene was delighted with this fine young comrade.

Please let me thank you for us all, you and your associates, for the splendid work you have been doing and the able and faithful manner in which you have been doing it, and with love and with every good wish from us all I am

Yours fraternally,
Theodore Debs

TLS, NjP, Mudd Library, ACLU Archives.

1. In his letter to Debs on January 10, 1922, Baldwin introduced Crane Gartz, the son of Kate Crane-Gartz, who was working as a volunteer on the staff of the American Civil Liberties Union and was authorized to describe to Debs the ACLU's campaign for the release of political prisoners. Gartz was, Baldwin explained, "a man of independent means" who had served in the war and "whose mind has been radicalized by the war." InTI, Debs Collection. Gartz was one of a delegation seeking Debs's release that met with President Harding on November 18, 1921. *New York Times,* November 19, 1921; May 14, 1949. One of his articles, "Beating Down the Wages of Colorado Coal Miners," appeared in the *Appeal to Reason,* on March 4, 1922.

EVD to J. E. Dyche

January 16, 1922
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Mr. Dyche:—

Please pardon me for my delay in dropping you this line of greeting from home and appreciation to you and your family. I had intended

doing so immediately on my return but you can hardly imagine how busy we have been early and late, day and night. The letters have been coming in a perfect deluge, thousands of them from all directions, and the visitors and telephone calls have pretty severely tested our sanity. I am sure you will understand and make allowance for seeming remissness. I wish to thank you for the perfectly fair manner in which you treated me, you and your blessed family, in which Mrs. Debs and my brother and his family join heartily. I can never forget dear Mrs. Dyche and the dear, tender, motherly spirit of her in a trying hour. The thought of her beautiful solicitude will always be to me a grateful memory. Theodore and I will always cherish the happiest recollections of the farewell visit at your hospitable home. The picture of the breakfast table will remain vividly with us through the coming years. It was all so genuinely hospitable and kind and heart-warming, and I can assure you that it went deeply into the heart of one just released from prison and found a permanent abiding place there. Each member of your dear family shared in the beautiful spirit of that memorable morning.

Please let me say to you confidentially that I made a personal plea to Mr. Daugherty for Mr. McDonald, your splendid secretary and I wish you would kindly impart this {to} the latter and ask him to treat it as personal. Mr. Daugherty made full notes of what I had to say in Mr. McDonald's behalf and I hope it may have some little effect, and I think it will. Please give my very kindest regards to Mr. McDonald for he was always very kind to me and I am glad to be his friend.

I will ask you also to please give Mr. Fletcher[1] and his family the cordial greetings and good wishes of Mrs. Debs and myself. Mr. Fletcher treated me with all kindness and I can only remember him in a very pleasant way.

But what touches me more deeply and what I appreciate more than all else that was done for me personally is the observation I made that you and Mr. Fletcher put yourselves in human touch with the prisoners there, the most helpless and friendless among them. Of such kindness is the very essence of religion and what you do for these erring or unfortunate brothers of ours you do tenfold for me. If the world but knew the infinite power of human love and the touch of a kindly hand! There is much more I would wish to say but you are a very busy man and happily I am now the same, and we will give our attention to those who most need it. You need not take the time out of your busy hours to answer this. Just give the benefit of it to some poor fellow there in your own characteristic way.

Mrs. Debs and Theodore and his wife and daughter and all of our family join in all loving greetings and best wishes to you and dear

Mrs. Dyche and her noble sister, and your fine boys, and all of your hospitable household.

Yours faithfully,
Eugene V. Debs

TLS, Eugene V. Debs Foundation, Debs Home.

1. Louis J. Fletcher, the deputy warden at Atlanta.

[Otto Branstetter] to EVD

January 16, 1922
[Chicago, Illinois]

Dear Gene:—

This is to remind you that we were to have a statement from you upon party matters, outlining your position, about the 15th of the month. I do not know whether your health has permitted you to see the comrades you wanted to see before issuing this statement, or not, but I hope it will be possible for you to issue it in the very new future.

While the delay could not be avoided, it is nevertheless injurious, as it creates doubt and uneasiness in the minds of comrades. I am prepared to come down any time that you are ready to see me, and will bring any or all of the N.E.C. members that you wish to attend.

Let me urge the importance of an announcement from you at the earliest possible date. I understand your natural desire to follow your announcement by immediate activity, but if your health will not permit this activity, it should not prevent your stating your position. I cannot overestimate the importance of you issuing your statement at the earliest possible date. Please let me know when this may be expected, and when you will be ready to see me.[1]

With best wishes, I am

Fraternally yours,
[Otto Branstetter]

TLc, IN.

1. Branstetter announced in *New Day*, January 7, 1922, that "Comrade Debs assures me emphatically that no arrangements have been made and no understandings or agreements have been reached committing him to any plan for his future work."

David Karsner to EVD

January 16, 1922
New York City

My Dear Gene:—

I would not for a moment bother you with a letter, or take a second of your time in this way, which I know is so precious to you if I did not feel the need of this communication. So please let me hasten to the subject.

The editorial director, Mr. E.F. Saxton,[1] of George H. Doran[2] Co, New York, has seen fit to discuss with me the matter of my writing a book that would treat exclusively of your three years in Atlanta. I talked freely with him about what I knew of my own personal knowledge and of the many observations I had made in the course of my many visits with you. I told him, too, of the number of printed interviews I had had with you, in which are included many stories and anecdotes and observations of others who knew and met you in the prison.

In the years that you were in prison I kept and filed away every single item that came to my attention that in any way had a bearing upon your case and personality, and you may imagine that I have considerable material from which to write such a book. Mr. Saxton understands that the matter would be entirely new so far as the general public is concerned, and that the book would not in any sense be a biographical study, as my first book attempted to be.

Mr. Saxton knows, too, from me that Boni and Liveright, who published my first Debs book, still have on hand some ten thousand copies, do to the fact that they overprinted on the third edition, believing the Debs book would be handled by the socialist party in the national campaign on 1920. Mr. Saxton is of the opinion that, in view of the sales from the first book—some 11,000—a second book would be justified, a book to be rather fully illustrated.

Mr. Saxton told me that if the matter were left entirely to his personal decision he would contract for the book at once, but he is obliged to defer to Mr. Doran, who is at present abroad, and will return in two weeks. He requested me to draw up a sort of chart or design of the book so that he might [have] some idea as to its contents, and which he would submit to Mr. Doran upon the latter's return with his personal recommendation for acceptance.

Now, I feel a very great hesitancy about launching upon this new literary endeavor for one very large reason—a reason sufficiently significant to balk my personal desire to write about you and the

dramatic incidents of your last three years in Atlanta. The reason is that you may have in mind to write the story yourself, and I could not for an instant do or say anything that would, by the slightest token, seem to be interfering with your own literary plans. I understood from you in Terre Haute that you had several literary offers—one especially from the World, and another from the Bell Library Syndicate. I do not know what your plans are with respect to these overtures. Maybe, if you should write such articles you would also want to contract for the book rights.

Your personal story would certainly be the one that the public most wants, and I for one hope you can see your way clear to do it. Moreover, I want to put my services at your command, and I pray you would feel free and easy to draft me for anything. Of course, Dear Gene, if you have in mind to write a series of articles and to arrange for the book rights, I would dismiss from my mind the thought of writing about your prison life. I would not, under any circumstances, do one thing to conflict with your endeavors.

On the other hand, if you have not in mind the matter of writing a book yourself, I should certainly like to do it—it would be a companion piece, a sequel, in a sense, to my first story or book. I shall not communicate any further with Messrs. Doran until I hear from you. And again, please pardon me from this infringement upon your moments. You see, I have taken a backhanded method of writing to you, for I knew if my letter came in a regular sack it would probably be delayed for some while.

I hope you can assure me that you are feeling well, and recovering from the excitement of your great, epochal, triumphant return. Please remember me to Mrs. Debs.

Gratefully and affectionately,
[David Karsner]
44 St. Marks Place,
New York City.

TLc, NN, Kars.

1. Eugene Francis Saxton (1884-1943) was editor in chief of the George H. Doran Company from 1917 to 1925, when he joined Harper & Brothers. At Harper's he established a reputation as one of the leading editors of his time and was credited with discovering, encouraging, and publishing the works of many of the best writers of the period, including John Dos Passos, E. B. White, and James Thurber.

2. George Henry Doran (1869-1956) moved his firm from Canada to New York City in 1909 and during the next quarter-century made it a leading publisher of English and American writers. One of its publications, *The Bookman,* was recognized as a model of excellence in literary journalism in the 1920s.

EVD to David Karsner

January 18, [1922]
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear David:—

Your letter came a moment ago. I am dropping everything to say yes to your proposition. You have done me a thousand loving and helpful kindnesses and there is nothing I can do I would not do gladly for you. I have already arranged partially for a series of prison articles[1] that are to be launched with the intention of turning the prisons of this country inside out and letting the people see them and their vicious influence and debauching results, just as they are. The purpose of these articles will be to make prisons less brutal to their victims and to make them as decent as such barbarian institutions can be made. These articles will probably be syndicated and appear simultaneously in a number of the biggest papers in the country. But please treat this with absolute confidence for nothing of a definite nature has yet been agreed upon and no mention of it must be made to anyone. I give you the information to enable you to understand my situation in connection with your proposition.

But the matter contained in these articles and the purpose of their writing will be entirely different, as I understand it, from the book you and your proposed publishers have in mind. The articles I propose writing are intended at their completion to be put into a book but these two undertakings will not only not interfere with each other but can, I think, be made mutually complementary and helpful. Please do not enter into any definite arrangement with the publishers until after a definite understanding has been reached in the negotiations in regard to the articles. There are several propositions here from big papers and syndicates of publishers. I shall get through with the matter as soon as possible but there will be delay for they give me no chance to get down to my work and I am not well as I should be. I am undergoing a course of drugless treatment and trying to be quiet until I get normal again but the callers keep coming and the mail continues to be very large.

We shall be able to see further about the matter a little later on and to make sure that everything is right we would better have a personal interview before reaching a definite conclusion. Your articles[2] are beautiful and touching and heart-warming. You are a flowing fountain of loving kindness and you have been to me and mine every-

thing in the world. We are all sending you our love and blessing and I am always

Yours faithfully,
E. V. Debs

Please tell Ervin that I intend to write an article for the Call[3] as soon as I can get to it. I would have done so before now if they would only let me get to work. Please give our love to "Jimmy" Oneal and all the good comrades about you except Ryan Walker. I will settle with that gross libeller personally.

Please give our special thanks with love to Ethel Nelson[4] We know how faithful she [has] been and all blessings on her devoted head.

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Debs's prison articles, a series of ten dealing with his prison experiences and his ideas on prison reform, ran from June to August 1921 in papers served by the Bell Literary Syndicate and were collected in *Walls and Bars*, which was published in 1927. Karsner collaborated with Debs in writing the articles.

2. Karsner's articles in the *New York Call*, covering Debs's release from prison, his trip to Washington, and his reception in Terre Haute, are the most detailed accounts of those events.

3. Debs's first article in the *Call* following his release was a call for "support of the I.W.W. Amnesty Campaign" (*Call*, January 29, 1922).

4. Ethel Nelson was on the editorial staff of the *New York Call*. See Ethel Nelson to Theodore Debs, October 8, 1921. InTI, Debs Collection.

Theodore Debs to Roger N. Baldwin

January 20, 1922
Terre Haute, Indiana

Dear Comrade Baldwin:

Your favor of the 17th.[1] is just at hand. Answering your inquiry I have to say that the Attorney General agreed to go over the list of political prisoners with Gene, promising to do the best he could in each case. But since that interview and the discussion that followed in the press, along with a sharp criticism to which they were subjected there may be a change of heart as there was before when Gene made his first trip to Washington. It is not likely that any fair consideration could be had now but at a later time it will be worth while to see what can be done along that line and you may be sure that Gene will have it in mind and leave nothing undone on his part to serve our comrades still in jail. Please note that what I have here written to you is for your own personal information and to be treated {as} confi-

dential. It may be all right to make this matter public at a later time but for the present only harm could come in making it known. We hear very much of your energetic, loyal and altogether splendid work and we are wishing you all success and send you renewed assurance of our loving regard.

Yours always,
Theodore Debs

TLS, NjP, Mudd Library, ACLU Archives.

1. In his letter to Theodore Debs on January 17, 1922, Baldwin asked whether either President Harding or Attorney General Daugherty had, in their conversations with Debs in Washington, "given your brother to understand that they would welcome his going over the remaining cases with them." Baldwin thought that both Harding and Daugherty were "adamant now because of the criticism heaped upon them as a result of the Christmas releases." InTI, Debs Collection.

[Theodore Debs?] to Charles Francis Drake

January 26, 1922
[Terre Haute, Indiana]

Dear Comrade Drake:—

I am writing you at the request of Gene and extremely sorry to have to write as I do. A letter has just been received from the National Office enclosing the printed matter just issued by you making announcements entirely unauthorized, and lodging a protest against the same. When Branstetter was here he asked Gene if he had given Tucker any statement for publication and Gene said no. Nor had he. This announcement flatly contradicts him and is going to make serious trouble. Ever since Gene's return he has been pressed for a statement by the various visitors and writers connected with Socialist publications, and he has uniformly refused to make any statement until he had time enough for proper consideration and could make the kind of a statement he felt the situation demanded. The Call has also written him saying that in view of its services it should be entitled to receive any statement that might be made, and the Call has a good claim to such consideration. When Comrade Tucker was here Gene authorized him in the matter of a Lincoln article[1] so far as the use of his name was concerned, and nothing else. If any other statement appears credited to him or committing him to any proposition of any consequence, especially a controversial one, he will simply have to repudiate it, a thing he will certainly very deeply regret.

The name of the Magazine[2] now bears, clearly indicating that it is Gene's magazine, is misleading and he would never have consented to it had he been consulted in regard to it, which he was not. We can scarcely understand such a method of procedure and it is surprising to say the least. Gene was eagerly desirous of helping the magazine, feeling very grateful for its past splendid services, but why should this desire be taken advantage of in a way to further complicate the extemely difficult position he is already in?

You announce him as the "Chief Contributor," virtually the editor or the equivalent of editorship, to which he would not have consented had the matter been mentioned to him, which it was not. This announcement is wholly unauthorized and there are other announcements that will certainly offend and bring protest from the Call and other socialist publications whose requests have been declined and who will have good right to feel, upon the basis of your announcement, that to favor his own personal organ, Gene has granted liberties and complied with demands which have been denied to them.

If the Magazine has not gone to press and anything in the form of a statement purporting to come from Gene has been inserted please take it out for if it commits him in any way to make additional trouble to the mountain that already confronts him he will be under the painful necessity of disavowing what is published and insisting upon the correction of titles and announcements which place him in a position he cannot consistently occupy or which are not in accord with the truth and the facts.[3]

Yours fraternally,
[Theodore Debs?]

TL, IN.

1. Debs's "Lincoln—Champion of Labor" appeared in *Debs Magazine,* February 1922. In the same issue, three other articles—"My Years in Prison," "The World Is Waiting," and "Freedom for All Political Prisoners"—were printed under his name.

2. As noted, *Debs Freedom Monthly,* edited by Irwin St. John Tucker and managed by Drake, became *Debs Magazine* in February 1922.

3. Debs changed his mind in the matter. In *Socialist World* (August 1922), he announced that "since my release from prison I have been the Chief Contributing Editor of the 'Debs Magazine' and shall continue to be so." His statement was also printed in the September 1922 issue of *Debs Magazine.*

EVD to Norman Hapgood

January 26, 1922
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Norman Hapgood:—

It has been in my heart to write you ever since my return. But there has not been the ghost of a chance. Not only have letters and telegrams been coming in a flood but the visitors and the calls by telephone from near and far have been so continuous that there has been scarcely a moment for letter-writing. The excitement and confusion have been so great following my long confinement in prison that I had to take to my bed from which I have just risen to give attention to the most pressing matters. There are stacks and stacks of accumulations all about me and I know not how I shall ever get things in order again. But I shall if I can only keep my sanity meanwhile, and I guess I can.

You have been so very, very kind and loyal and helpful, so sustaining and inspiring all through our struggle and my heart is full of thankfulness and love for you. Mrs. Curry has kept me fully advised of her correspondence with you and of your readiness and eagerness always to do anything and everything in your power for my comrades and myself, and you certainly did your share in full and overflowing measure to secure our liberation, for which we shall never cease to be grateful to you, but we who are now free in part must not forget for a moment that our comrades are still in prison and that our duty to them demands that the agitation for amnesty be continued until their liberation is also secured.

Please excuse this very brief acknowledgment of your personal devotion and your invaluable services. Anything the written page might convey to you, however fitly expressed, would be still but a pitifully inadequate transcript of what my heart holds for you, and if at any time in the future I can serve you in any manner it will be a pleasure to me indeed to do so.

With all loving greetings and good wishes to you and your dear ones in which my wife and all our family and friends and comrades join heartily, I am always

Your faithfully,
Eugene V. Debs

TLS, Collection of Harry T. Fleichman, New York City.

EVD to Peter Witt[1]

February 1, 1922
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Peter Witt:—

Please do not think me remiss for not writing you sooner. You cannot imagine what a time we have had since my return. The letters have been coming in a deluge and the callers have been with us day and night so there has been no chance to write. First of all, thank you very warmly for Mrs. Debs and myself for the basket of beautiful holiday flowers which gave greater joy than I can tell you. How very kind in you to remember us in this loving way! Your letter too touched us deeply.

Your suggestion as to a meeting at Cleveland and your kindness in connection therewith are fully appreciated but for the present and for some time to come I can make no plans and do no platform work. The wear and strain of the last five years, the persecution and confinement have sapped me of my physical strength and I must first recuperate that before I can consider any of the numberless propositions that are here awaiting consideration. Meanwhile you may be assured that your own suggestions will be thought over carefully in the making of any plans for the future.

Mrs. Debs joins me in thanks and all affectionate good wishes to you and your family and I am as ever,

Yours faithfully,
Eugene V. Debs

TLS, OCLWHi, Witt Papers.

1. As noted, Peter Witt (1869-1946), a leader in Cleveland's reform movement during the Tom Johnson era and organizer of the city's widely respected Town Forum, was a longtime friend and correspondent of Debs.

EVD to Louis Untermeyer[1]

February 6, 1922
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Louis Untermeyer:—

I have long been deeply mindful of all I owe you for your loyal devotion and the poetic inspiration that so thrilled and sustained me

during my prison days and it has been in my heart to say this to you and to thank you and send you my love ever since my return but there has been scarcely a spare moment allowed me by the good friends and comrades who have literally overwhelmed me with their kind and joyous attentions. The beautiful poem you inscribed to me touched me more deeply than I can tell you, and the book of inspiring modern poems[2] with your more than kind inscription which is now in my hands is a treasure indeed that I shall cherish through all my days.

You will pardon, I am sure, this very inadequate expression of my appreciation and gratitude. Some good day when I can take you by the hand I shall try to tell you in person what appears so formal and almost meaningless on the written page. You are a real poet of the world of freedom and fraternity now in the making and your name will have a permanent place and a radiant one in the struggle to achieve it. My wife and brother and all of our family join in love and all best wishes to you and yours with all our hearts.

Yours faithfully,
Eugene V. Debs

TLS, InU, Lilly Library.

1. Louis Untermeyer (1885-1977) was a New York manufacturer and businessman who achieved fame and distinction as a poet and literary critic. In addition to a score of books, Untermeyer, a socialist, wrote for the *Liberator*, the *Nation*, the *New York Call*, and many other publications, and his lectures on poetry and criticism were given at countless colleges and universities. Untermeyer edited a number of anthologies of American and English literature, probably the most well known of which was *Modern American Poetry*, first published in 1919 and in many editions thereafter.

2. A revised and enlarged edition of *Modern American Poetry* was published by Harcourt, Brace in 1921.

EVD to Helen Keller

February 6, 1922
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Helen Keller:—

A thousand thanks for the beautiful and inspiring telegram from you which greeted me here on my return! Coming from you this fine, appreciative expression touched me to the heart and will be cherished as a treasure of priceless value. This acknowledgement is much belated owing to my having been kept so very busy since my return. I am

always keenly interested, as you must know, in everything I see and hear of you and your work.

Mrs. Debs joins me in greetings of affection and all best wishes and I am always,

Yours faithfully,
Eugene V. Debs

TLS, American Foundation for the Blind, Keller Collection.

EVD to George Sylvester Viereck

February 14, 1922
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Mr. Viereck:—

If you knew how very busy I have been kept since my return, and how many visitors and messages of all kinds that have been coming in a steady stream all these days you would not think me remiss for not sooner acknowledging your latest kindness and the many others that preceded it and returning my warmest thanks for your sympathetic interest and your loyal devotion during my prison experience. I have been ill too and I have not yet recovered. I was persecuted and threatened daily for two years preceding my confinement and although my spirit remained undaunted my physical health has been undermined and it will take a considerable period of quiet and rest to restore my strength.

Your kind note of the 31st. ult. and your splendid editorial in the current issue of your "American"[1] have been read with real satisfaction and full appreciation. Please let me say that each kind word you have spoken in my behalf and each helpful service you have rendered me is remembered gratefully and will be to the last of my days. This brief and inadequate expression contains but little of what my heart holds for you. I think a man who has had the prison in his life has an appreciation all his own of the friends who were loyal and true while the enemies were seeking to dishonor and destroy him.

My wife joins me in greetings of affection and all best wishes to you and all of your household.

Yours faithfully,
Eugene V. Debs

TLS, NNU Tam, Feinstone Collection.

1. In "A Tardy Release" (*American Monthly*, February 1922), Viereck wrote that

"Mr. Harding's tardiness in freeing his rival candidate takes the savor out of his action. The quality of mercy is too strained, blessing neither him that gives nor him that receives."

EVD to Frank P. O'Hare

March 6, 1922
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Frank:—

I must tell you and Kate how thoroughly I appreciate, as do we all here, the masterly article by Kate on the Clark case,[1] bringing out the essential facts and making them clear as pike staffs. I read the article with rapt attention and was thrilled by some of its eloquent and stirring passages. How they can hold Clark in prison in the light of these facts is only explainable on the ground that they can hold anyone they want to and do anything they please. The defense of the I.W.W. and the clear light in which the organization is placed is courageously and admirably done, in a way to make it literature, and worthy of all commendation. The whole presentment is clear and strong, appealing and inspiring. It is one of Kate's surpassing efforts and does immense credit to her fire-tipped pen. The only thing in it I would criticise is that Stanley's "patriotism" is emphasized I think to his disadvantage.[2] It is the irony of fate that he should be in prison for his patriotism but it is quite certain that the plea of loyalty and patriotism in behalf of an agitator working for the I.W.W. don't count with the plutes and their court hirelings. The fact of Stanley's having been in the service of the I.W.W. puts the kabosh on his patriotism and puts him on the same level and {in} the same category with the I.W.W. defendants in the same trial. But even at that there is not a solitary thing in the record upon which they could have legally convicted him. It is a clear case of the most shameless and brutal persecution and the same is true in varying degrees of every one of the I.W.W. members who are now serving long sentences. The whole proceeding was perfectly damnable and it makes one's blood boil to think of such an outrage being perpetrated upon men void of offense save that of being men and that there is no redress for such an infamy. You have brought out the facts very clearly in your last issue. Kate's exposition of the I.W.W.[3] and the cause of its persecution shows clearly and convincingly that Stanley and all the rest of the boys were railroaded because of their identity with the I.W.W. and for no other reason. Compared with the filthy freak of a Landis who sentenced

them these men are paragons of virtue. The only criminal I can think of in that connection is Landis himself and other lackeys of his ilk who are put on the bench for just such nefarious service.

My strength is coming back but very slowly. I yearn to be on the platform again to do my share to get our comrades out of their hell-holes. I feel a sense of guilt to be out while they are in. My heart has bled for Dorothy Clark.[4] How brutally they have played their wanton game with her, deceiving and betraying her and mocking at her misery! She has certainly been a heroine through it all and if there is not compensation in store for her there is something wrong with the moral order of the universe. We are all joining in greetings of good cheer and warmest wishes.

Yours as ever,
E. V. Debs

TLS, IU, Baskette Collection.

1. Kate Richard O'Hare's "The Case of Stanley J. Clark" (*Rip-Saw*, February 1922) dealt with the continuing imprisonment at Leavenworth of Clark, "an innocent Texan who has sacrificed four years of his life as a result of Palmer's blunders," and other IWW members sentenced by Judge Kenesaw Mountain Landis in the 1918 trial in Chicago.

2. O'Hare described Clark as "so rampant anti-German and pro-war that he could no longer work in the Socialist movement before the United States entered the war."

3. "A Few Facts about the I.W.W." (*Rip-Saw*, February 1922).

4. Stanley Clark's wife, whose efforts to secure his release were described in "Mrs. Clark's Battle for Her Husband's Liberty" (*Rip-Saw*, February 1922).

Theodore Debs to David Karsner

March 13, 1922
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear David:—

Please call on Mr. Snevily[1] of the Bell Syndicate, 727 World Bldg., at your earliest convenience and he will advance you $100. to cover your preliminary expenses coming to Terre Haute.[2] Please come as suggested in my previous note[3] as soon as your affairs will permit. If you will advise time of arrival we will meet you at the depot. Should we by any possibility miss you at the station go to the St. Nicholas Hotel[4] where a room will be reserved for you. You walk into the hotel in leaving the station and it is quite close by. After you get here we can make any kind of arrangements you wish. I suppose you have a typewriter and if so and you can conveniently do so please bring it

with you. Also, if you have any material that can be used in preparing the prison articles or the book that is in contemplation after the articles are written, please bring that with you also.

We are all looking forward to your coming with happy anticipation. The comrades of the Call staff will miss you greatly and Ryan Walker will say quite likely that their gain will be our loss. Anyway, you know without being told how very welcome you will be here.

Yours as ever,
Theodore Debs

TLS, NN Kars.

1. Henry Mansfield Snevily (1886-1954) was a member of the editorial staff of the *New York Herald* from 1909 to 1917 and general manager of the Bell Literary Syndicate from 1921 to 1951.

2. Karsner came to Terre Haute to work with Debs on the prison articles for the Bell Literary Syndicate.

3. See Theodore Debs to Karsner, March 11, 1922. InTI, Debs Collection.

4. The St. Nicholas Hotel at 448 North Ninth Street in Terre Haute was directly behind the Debs home at 451 North Eighth Street.

EVD to Otto Branstetter

March 25, 1922
Terre Haute, Indiana

Dear Otto:—

Your letter of the 23rd. to Theodore has been passed to me and carefully read. You cannot seem to understand that I am sick and worn and that I have not had the ghost of a chance to rest since I got out of the penitentiary. The visitors come every day and most of them have grievances and troubles to tell me about or want something done. I have just had two hours with a communist. Another is waiting for me. I am just about able to be on my feet. To make good a promise I have been sitting or rather standing every spare moment for a bust[1] during the past month when I was not actually in bed. Our house is all torn up under repairs that have been neglected for years. The house was literally falling to pieces. My wife has been ill for weeks, lately with an attack of the flu and on the verge of utter nervous prostration. Last night all night, after I got through with my day's work at nearly eleven o'clock I sat up or walked about because my heart would not allow me to lie down, all due to utter exhaustion of my nerves and my physical system generally. I am thirty pounds underweight. Under these circumstances I am trying with the help of

Comrade Karsner who is here to write a series of promised prison articles, to keep up with my correspondence which consists mainly of troubles that are brought to me and of requests of one kind and another, to see all the people who come, and at the same time to keep perfectly quiet and retired and see no one and avoid all excitement under strict orders of the doctor who has told me that I was committing suicide. But this probably does not mean anything to you for I doubt if you can understand it.[2] You may be sure that it is not to my liking to write to you this way. I have made it a life-long rule to keep my troubles to myself. But your persistency must be my excuse. You and those you speak for insist that I must declare myself and of course declare myself your way. It seems to me you would not care much what became of me so I did what you wanted me to do. Now of course I know {what} you are pressing me to do and I should not blame you for it. But I am not going to do it. At least I am not going to do it in my present physical condition. I have given all but my life and I would like to keep that for a little while yet. Perhaps I may and perhaps not. As between keeping the breath in my body and "declaring" myself the latter does not appeal to me. Nor would it to you. You simply know nothing about my situation. Twice since beginning this letter I have been interrupted by visitors. A letter has just come from Maynard Shipley saying that he and his wife had quit the party because they could no longer stand it.[3] They said it was run by politicians who would trade anything in it for votes. Another letter from a comrade mortally offended because a very long letter written by him was answered too briefly and the charge is made that we "killed his enthusiasm, a very wicked thing" by not giving proper and detailed attention to his long and to us very uninteresting letter. So many comrades would have us believe that the particular matter they have to offer us is the most important of all and should have first consideration. When I entered prison there was a united party. When I came out it had been torn to pieces. I had nothing to do with it. But promptly on my release I am expected to get into the factional fight, utterly disgusting in some of its phases and side with everybody against everybody else.

Of course I would not have waited so long to take a definite position had it not been for the state of my health. I did not know to what extent I had been sapped of my physical strength until the reaction set in, and I have been given no chance, nor will be given any here to rest and be quiet. The comrades will not permit it. I suppose they think now that the capitalists are through with me for awhile it is their turn. If it is at all possible I am going to get away from here as soon as I am through with certain things that have to be done and

go to some retreat in the mountains where I may have a chance to get into condition to do something. It is quite sure that in my present state I am outraging myself every day and putting off and perhaps making forever impossible my rehabilitation. It will take two or three months at least under favorable circumstances, perhaps six months or even a year to recover my health and strength. I do not know. I do know what nervous prostration is and if the devil had it I would pity him.

Now you know as well as I do what would result from my "declaring" myself as you and those you speak for want me to do. You know that would not be the end but the beginning and that forthwith I would be in the factional dogfight and in the low state of my vitality I would be consumed in it. I have never engaged in that sort of thing, having always considered it beneath me, and I shall not do so now. If you are right in saying that the great majority of the party insist upon it then I shall quit the party. I am still a member and that ought to signify that I have not turned against the party as has been intimated, and just why it is incumbent on me, to "declare definitely" my position and where I stand in the present chaotic and disgraceful condition with which I had nothing to do, in bringing about, especially at a time when I am fighting for my life that I may be of some real use to the cause, is not clear to me. It is true that I agreed to do this as soon as I was able to do it and back it up and sustain myself and I expected that time to come before now but it has not come. I pledged myself, as you know, to hear certain representatives of other factions before taking a definite stand, but I have not yet been well enough to do so and that is the reason and the only reason it has not been done, and surely that should be reason enough. Now if I live I am going to keep that promise as I keep every promise I make and yet I would break it and violate my plighted word if I yielded to your insistent demand that I issue a statement declaring just where I stand without further delay. As a matter of fact I do not know where I stand in reference to certain very vital phases of the present situation. There is a good deal that I do not know that I would like to know but have had no means of knowing.

You recite the outrages perpetrated by the communists upon the Socialist party but unfortunately the outrages were not confined to one side. I have never approved but have opposed and condemned the disruptive and destructive tactics that certain elements have resorted to in their insane attempts to destroy each other.

You publicly charged Wagenknecht with being a thief.[4] You were called upon to produce the proof or retract the charge. So far as I know you have done neither. I am assured that the charge is an

infamous slander and it certainly is unless you have evidence to sustain it {and if not you} should retract the charge. I am sending you the suit I wore when I quit the prison which you expressed the wish to have and with it I am sending my prison cap.

I am as ever with kindest wishes,

Yours fraternally,
E. V. Debs

TLS, IN.

1. The bust of Debs was done by Moses W. Dykaar. "Sculptor Does Debs," *Terre Haute Tribune*, March 5, 1922.

2. Branstetter tried, in "Stay Away from Terre Haute" (*Socialist World*, January 1922) and in the *New Day* (May 20, 1922), to impress upon readers that Debs felt "my friends are killing me."

3. Maynard Shipley, as noted, served as one of Debs's campaign managers in his congressional campaign in 1916. In December 1921 he married Miriam Allen De Ford (1888-1975), a socialist journalist and author.

4. In the *Socialist World* (December 1921), Branstetter wrote that he was "informed that Alfred Wagenknecht . . . has been expelled from the underground Communist organization for misappropriation of funds." The charge was denied in "A Lie Nailed," *Worker*, March 4, 1922.

[Otto Branstetter] to EVD

March 29, 1922
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Comrade Debs:—

From the tone of your last letter, I am afraid that our correspondence tends to take on the character of a personal controversy, which is entirely foreign to my intentions.

In my communication to Theodore, I attempted to explain the situation as I understood it from the communications received in this office. I have no desire to add to your troubles or difficulties, and feel that I have kept a good many visitors away from Terre Haute, and have saved you the receipt of innumerable letters from party members, urging you to make your position known. It seems, however, that this was something of a mistake, as Theodore says I am the only comrade who has written advising the course which I suggested, while very many of them have urged the contrary. This simply means that our people have refrained from seeing or writing you, out of consideration for your wishes and your health, while the other groups have not. In the same day's mail that brought your letter, there were letters

from Millard Price,[1] Adolph Germer, Wm. H. Henry and W.R. Snow,[2] urging the importance of an early declaration from you. These in one day's mail. Contrary to the policy followed heretofore, I did not stall these comrades off with an indefinite, evasive statment, but told them frankly that I did not know what you proposed doing, and had no authority to define your position or policy, either publicly or privately, and that they would have to write to you direct for a statement on same.

In this connection a comrade recently asked me if a formal invitation to speak at the National Convention had been sent you from the National Office. I had, of course, not considered that such a formal invitation was necessary.[3] I had assumed that in case you were ready to make a public statement by that time, that you would perhaps choose to do so either in person or by a communication to the Convention. Personally, I think it would be a wise thing to take advantage of that occasion to make your position known, and to submit to the membership whatever suggestions or recommendations you may care to make regarding the future course or policy of the organization. With this, as with everything else that arises as long as the present situation continues, I am at a loss to know what to do. In case you did not wish to accept, it would create another embarrassing situation, and I assure you that I have no desire to multiply them. Please understand, however, that we would be pleased to have either a speech or a communication from you, outlining your position, regardless of what that may be, and that I would be glad to send a formal invitation or have the Executive Committee pass a motion extending such an invitation, in case I am given to understand that such action would not be unwelcome.

As to the Wagenknecht matter, I know of no reason why I should have replied to inquiries or denials from irresponsible or unauthorized sources. The only persons who are in position to speak authoritatively regarding the Wagenknecht report are the members of the Executive Committee of the Communist party. Up to date I have seen or heard of no denial from them, unless the denial by Caleb Harrison, Secretary of the Workers' Party[4] is to be considered as the official denial of the Communist Party. While it is true that Mr. Harrison as Secretary of the Workers' Party, probably does speak for the Executive Committee of the Communist Party, I think they are hardly prepared to publicly admit this fact. As to the report itself, I received it from three different comrades in Cleveland, Wageknecht's home town, where it was in general circularization last November, and quite commonly believed in Party and radical circles. The same report came to me from an entirely different source while in New York City. Frankly, I do not

know whether it is true or not, but do not consider it at all unreasonable. I know that Wageknecht accepted the Communist theories and that these theories include a repudiation of honesty, decency and fair dealing as "petty bourgeois virtues," and the acceptance of the pernicious doctrine that the end justifies the means. With this philosophy, I would not be surprised at any dishonorable or dishonest action by any member of the Communist Party. On the contrary, I am surprised that there have not been more of such occurrences than there have. As a matter of fact, there have been more than is generally known, but thanks to the underground system, such occurrences can be covered up and the general public and even the rank and file kept in ignorance of them. As stated before, the only people who can authoritatively confirm or deny the report is the Executive Committee of the Communist Party, and as a matter of fact, their doing so would not be very conclusive evidence. Under the peculiar ethics of the Communists, they would not hesitate to deny it if it were true, or confirm it if it was untrue if, by doing so, they could further their ends. This lack of positive information regarding such matters is one of the beauties of their underground system.

As to Wageknect's general character, I know that he is neither honest or honorable. I know that he stole mailing lists when he left the National Office. I know that he arranged with Firth,[5] who remained in the National Office, to steal documents and letters he deemed important and send to Wageknecht. I know that Wageknecht was one of the three Trustees holding the headquarters property for the Socialist Party. Two years ago it was necessary to have the signatures of the trustees in order to renew the mortgage on headquarters, and that Wageknecht refused to sign the necessary papers. It was not for fear of exposure or arrest on account of the indictment then pending in Chicago, for the papers were placed in the hands of his friends, so that he could have signed and acknowledged them before a friendly Notary, without any member of the Socialist Party or any outsider knowing his whereabouts. Whether he refused to sign because he thought his signature was absolutely necessary and that he could shake us down, or whether it was in hopes that the Party would lose its headquarters, I do not know.

And after all, Gene, what does this amount to? It is not the issue. Grant that I am a liar and a villain, and Mr. Wageknecht is a Christian gentleman; What of it? I belong to the Socialist Party, Mr. Wageknecht belongs to the Communist Party. I have not asked you to express a preference as between Mr. Wageknect and myself as individuals, but between these two Parties, which are separate and distinct organizations, with well defined and antagonistic theories and principles.

Much as I esteem your friendship and good opinion, I am not vitally interested in your opinion as to whether Wageknecht or myself is the best man. I am interested in knowing whether you side with one of these Parties as against the other, or whether your sympathies are so equally divided between them and their principles that you are unable to take a position in favor of either.

Your communication pointing out that you have continued to be, and are, a member of the Socialist Party does answer that question to a large extent, and answers it satisfactorily so far as I am concerned. I think, however, that the Party membership and the entire radical movement has a right to that knowledge, and such a statement from you to that effect, with such comments, criticism, recommendations or suggestions as you may see fit to make. I believe that the convening of the National Convention on April 29th, offers a favorable opportunity for the issuance of such a statement, either prior to the Convention, or in a communication addressed to the Convention, so that the Delegates will have your opinion and recommendations regarding the various matters that will come before them.

The Communists have no hope that you will come out in support of their Party, and their game is to prevent your coming out in support of the Socialist Party. No matter how unintentional it may be on your part, the fact is that your delay is giving aid and comfort to the Communists, and hurting the Socialists. Your position of taking time for unprejudiced investigation and calm deliberation is, in its effects, not neutral, but pro-Communist. You are playing directly into their hands.

As to the suggestion that there is a possibility of unity between the Socialist Party and the Communist Party, I wish to say frankly that there will be no such unity as far as I am concerned. The honest comrades who were led astray by the lies and brain-storms of the Fraina-Ruthenberg-Wagenknecht crowd, know where the Socialist Party stands—and has always stood. If they are Socialists they can put in their application for membership and be accepted. Under no circumstances will we deal with the Communist Party or with its alias the Workers' Party, or accept back to membership the most responsible of their unscrupulous leaders. In thus expressing my personal opinion, I may not state the position of the Party as a whole, but I know I state the position of a large number of active Party members and workers. As stated in my communication to Theodore, I believe any attempt to secure unity of the organizations is foredoomed to failure and will result only in additional splits and controversies.

I wish to thank you for the prison suit and cap, which have been

received and will be placed in the "suit-case" for preservation in the National headquarters.

With all good wishes, I am

Fraternally yours,
[Otto Branstetter]
Executive Secretary.

TLc, IN.

1. Millard Price was state secretary of the Socialist party in Ohio and the party's candidate for governor of Ohio in 1922. *New Day,* March 18, 1922.

2. William R. Snow was state secretary of the Socialist party in Illinois and later a national organizer and member of the party's national executive committee. *American Appeal,* May 8, 1926.

3. On March 15, 1922, Branstetter wrote to Debs to ask for "an article of from 1,000 to 1,500 words" by Debs to be printed in the party's "souvenir Convention Book," which was being published in connection with the national convention scheduled for April 29, 1922, in Cleveland. He did not mention Debs's attendance at the convention. InTI, Debs Collection.

4. As noted, the Workers party was founded in New York in December 1921 with James P. Cannon as national secretary and Caleb Harrison, formerly of the Socialist Labor party, as national secretary-treasurer. *Worker,* February 11, 1922. In its February 1922 issue, *Socialist World* called the new party "the above ground organization of the underground Communist Party."

5. Edwin Firth was an Indianapolis, Indiana, socialist who was in charge of the literature department at the party's headquarters in Chicago during Adolph Germer's tenure as executive secretary. Germer fired Firth in 1919 because the party could "no longer afford" to pay him. *Ohio Socialist,* August 27, 1919. Firth, who joined the Communist Labor party at its founding, was convicted in August 1920 of "conspiracy to overthrow the government" but died while his case was being appealed to the Illinois Supreme Court. *New York Times,* August 3, 1920.

EVD to Lucy Robins

March 30, 1922
Terre Haute, Indiana

Dear Lucy:—

No, I have not forgotten you. I have never been guilty of forgetting those who have been kind to me and I surely could not be insensible to your devotion during the prison days and to your many kindnesses to me in particular while I was at Atlanta. It is not that which accounts for my silence. It has simply been impossible for me to keep up with demands. I have not had a day of real rest since I am back and yet the doctor insists that if I am not quiet I shall not live to do any more work for the cause. Each day when I was not in bed I exceeded my

strength and have kept myself weak doing it and yet I have not been able to meet more than a fraction of the demands. The thousands of letters that poured in could not be answered by me and most of them could not be answered at all by any of us for they came at a time when we were all torn up and with callers without number and excitement, a combination which almost resulted in my complete collapse. I have had to trust to the comrades to understand that I cannot possibly give personal attention to the immense correspondence which comes here. I have been trying to recuperate but it cannot be done here and I shall have to leave for somewhere else as soon as I have disposed of the more pressing matters that are awaiting my attention. My wife too is ill and under the care of a nerve specialist who is trying to save her from nervous prostration. My brother is just getting over the flu and his work including correspondence has also had to be neglected. We have thought and spoken of you many times and always with an appreciative and grateful sense of your loving services during the entire term of imprisonment. Like others who are near and dear to me I have had you in mind and heart and my messages, though not sent you on the written page, went to you nevertheless over the invisible wires, breathing out affectionate remembrance and every good wish in the world.

I hope this finds you well and in your usual fine flow of spirits. We all join here in cordial greetings and warmest wishes to you, and with deeply grateful recollection of all your kindness to me at Atlanta and all the devoted and faithful services you rendered the political prisoners I am always,

Yours sincerely,
Eugene V. Debs

TLS, InTI, Robins Papers.

James Driscoll[1] to EVD

April 5, 1922
Leavenworth, Kansas

Sir:—

In-mates of this institution are not permitted to correspond with in-mates or former in-mates of this or any penal institution, except by special permission from the Warden.

Your letter, addressed to J.O. Bentall, returned herewith.

Respectfully
Jam. Driscoll
Mail Clerk.

[EVD letter to J. O. Bentall, dated April 3, 1922]
My dear Comrade Bentall:—

You have not heard from me by letter but I am sure you know that my daily message has been going to you and that you have not for a moment been forgotten. You have borne yourself with the loftiest courage and fortitude through all your trial and the deprivation it entailed, reflecting the highest credit alike upon yourself and the cause. You have carried your cross with your head erect and your spirit undaunted and by your splendid self-sacrifice you have exalted yourself and set an inspiring example to your comrades everywhere.

I am not writing you at length for I know it is not necessary. For obvious reasons I refrain from saying in this letter what there is in my heart in regard to your case. Of one thing you may always rest assured and that is that you have not sacrificed your freedom in vain.

My wife and brother join me in affectionate greeting and best wishes to you and all your dear ones. Please remember us also in comradely greeting to all the prisoners there[2] who are paying the penalty of their loyalty to the cause. We shall not rest while one of them remains in prison.

Yours fraternally,
Eugene V. Debs

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. The exchange of letters between Debs and James Driscoll, who was a mail clerk at Leavenworth, and Debs's letter to Jacob Bentall, who had been serving a two-year prison term there, were printed in *New Day*, April 29, 1922.

2. As noted, most of the IWW prisoners convicted at Chicago in 1918 were confined at Leavenworth.

EVD to James Driscoll

April 7, 1922
Terre Haute, Indiana

Dear Sir:

Your note of the 5th. inst. furnishes additional proof that the brutal and idiotic rules that govern the average prison stamp the officials who control these institutions as being intellectually and morally the

inferiors of the hapless human beings in their custody. Of course I do not blame you in the least for you are simply executing, as you are paid to do, the stupid and heartless orders of your "superiors."

Quite respectfully,
[Eugene V. Debs]

TLc, InTI, Debs Collection.

EVD to Samuel Castleton

April 14, 1922
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Comrade Castleton:—

I have been wanting to drop you this line for some time but have either been ill or kept so busy that I have been unable to do so. I have been under the necessity of making the same excuse to many other comrades. For the first few weeks after my return we were beseiged with callers and the excitement was so great that there was no chance to give attention to the enormous mail that poured in from all directions not to [mention] many other matters which have suffered neglect during my long absence. After the excitement subsided in a measure I fell ill from nervous and physical exhaustion. It came as a reaction after the years of strain and trial, including the ones preceding my imprisonment. Since then I have been trying under difficulties to recover my strength but the callers keep coming and the demands come with the daily mail and I somehow find more to do each day than I have the strength to do. Our family doctor has gravely warned me several times that I must have rest and quiet if I am ever to take up my work again and I am sure he is right but rest and quiet are not easy to be had in my situation. At a later time when I can get my affairs here somewhat in order again I am intending to go out West on some ranch where I shall be more likely able to rest and recuperate and return to my post which you may know I am very anxious to do.

I am dropping you this line to return my thanks for your personal kindness to me during my prison days. I remember each act with full appreciation and this inadequate acknowledgment would have been made long ago but for the circumstances which prevented me in this as in so many other instances from putting what was in my heart to the written page.

I am sorry that there was not time for a more extended personal visit with you, as I had intended, before leaving Atlanta.

Please extend my thanks also to Comrade Clark and say to him that I shall also remember him gratefully for his unvarying kindness and devotion during all my days in the Atlanta prison.

I hope this finds you well and in good spirits and doing well in every way. Please give my affectionate greeting to your wife and remember me lovingly to your sweet little daughter. Please also give my loving regards to Comrade Clark and his wife and the dear little children who came to see me and brought me gifts that gave me joy and comfort indeed.

My wife and Theodore and his family all join me in loving greetings and best wishes to you all and I am always,

Yours faithfully,
E. V. Debs

TLS, NNU Tam, Debs Collection.

EVD to Sidney Yellen[1]

April 29, 1922
Terre Haute, Indiana

SIDNEY YELLEN

THE INVITATION EXTENDED BY YOUR COMMITTEE TO ADDRESS THE MASS MEETING TO BE HELD AT CLEVELAND[2] ON SUNDAY IS FULLY APPRECIATED BUT THE STATE OF MY HEALTH PREVENTS ME, TO MY DEEP REGRET, FROM BEING WITH YOU ON THAT OCCASION. PLEASE SAY TO FRIENDS AND COMRADS ASSEMBLED THERE THAT I SHALL BE WITH THEM IN SPIRIT AT LEAST AND THAT IF MY BODILY STRENGTH WERE EQUAL TO THE DEMAND I SHOULD VERY GLADLY BE PRESENT AND TAKE ACTIVE PART IN THE DEMONSTRATION. ASIDE FROM THE GENERAL ISSUE OF SOCIALISM VERSUS CAPITALISM THERE ARE SEVERAL VITAL QUESTIONS WHICH APPEAL TO US AT THIS TIME AND CONCERNING WHICH I TRUST THE CLEVELAND MASS MEETING WILL PLACE ITSELF UPON RECORD IN UNEQUIVOCAL TERMS.

THESE QUESTIONS BRIEFLY SUMMARIZED INCLUDE THE MINERS-STRIKE[3] WHICH SHOULD HAVE ALL THE BACKING AND SUPPORT IN OUR POWER, AS SHOULD ALSO THE CAMPAIGN FOR THE AMNESTY OF THE SO-CALLED POLITICAL PRISONERS, WHO, AS A MATTER OF FACT, ARE INDUSTRIAL PRISONERS FOR THEY ARE HELD SOLELY BECAUSE OF THEIR LABOR UNION CONNECTIONS AND ACTIVITIES. THEIR CONTIN-

UED INCARCERATION IN THE LIGHT OF THEIR ABSOLUTE INNOCENCE OF CRIME DISGRACES OUR GOVERNMENT AND IMPEACHES OUR STANDING BEFORE THE CIVILIZED WORLD.

THE RUSSIAN FAMINE IS A MATTER OF SUPREMEST IMPORTANCE NOT ONLY TO US BUT TO THE WORKING CLASS OF EVERY NATION ON EARTH.[4] THE WORKERS OF RUSSIA WHO SACIFICIED THEIR ALL IN THE STRUGGLE FOR HUMAN EMANCIPATION LOOK TO THE WORKERS OF AMERICA TO SAVE THEM FROM STARVATION AND THEY MUST NOT BE DISAPPOINTED. EVERY DOLLAR AND EVERY PENNY IT IS IN OUR POWER TO RAISE MUST GO TO RELIEVE THE UNSPEAKABLE TORTURE OF OUR RUSSIAN COMRADES AND THEIR FAMILIES, AND THE CAMPAIGN FOR FUNDS MUST BE WAGED WITH INCREASING ENERGY AND DETERMINATION UNTIL THE APPALLING SCOURAGE HAS BEEN VANQUISHED AND THE MILLIONS OF SUFFERING VICTIMS HAVE BEEN RESCUED FROM THEIR FRIGHTFUL FATE.

THE ASSAULT OF THE WALL STREET PROFITEERS AND THEIR ALLIES THE CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE, MANUFACTURERS — ASSOCIATION, RAILROAD MAGNATES, COAL BARONS AND OTHER EXPLOITERS AND EXTORTIONISTS, UPON THE AMERICAN LABOR MOVEMENT IN THE NAME OF THE OPEN SHOP[5] MUST BE MET BY A UNITED FRONT OF ALL THE FORCES AT THE COMMAND OF THE WORKING CLASS. THE OPEN SHOP MEANS THE DEAD UNION, AND ORGANIZED LABOR IS ON THE DEFENSIVE AND MUST FIGHT FOR ITS LIFE. IT IS NOW EITHER SOLIDARITY OR SLAVERY AND EVERY ONE OF US IS BOUND TO STAND BEHIND THE WORKERS IN THE WAR OF EXTERMINATION BEING WAGED UPON THEIR UNIONS BY THEIR MASTERS.

THE CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHT OF FREE SPEECH, FREE ASSEMBLAGE AND A FREE PRESS MUST BE ASSOCIATED AND MAINTAINED AT WHATEVER COST. IT HAS REQUIRED GREAT SACRIFICE TO MAINTAIN THIS RIGHT AND IT MAY REQUIRE MUCH MORE BUT WE SHALL NOT SHRINK FROM OUR DUTY FOR IF THIS PRIMAL RIGHT IS LOST LIBERTY IS DEAD AND WE ARE SLAVES.

NOW IS THE TIME FOR US ALL TO PROFIT BY THE BITTER LESSONS OF THE WAR, TO UNIFY OUR FORCES ON THE INDUSTRIAL AND POLITICAL FIELDS, SET OUR FACES RESOLUTELY TO THE FRONT, AND MARCH TOGETHER, STRIKE TOGETHER, VOTE TOGETHER AND FIGHT TOGETHER UNTIL CAPITALIST AUTOCRACY IS ABOLISHED AND MANKIND IS FREE.

EUGENE V DEBS

Telegram, IN.

1. Sidney Yellen (1878-1943) was born in Russia, came to the United States in 1907, and spent most of his career working for the AFL (bakers' union) in Cleveland

and for the Socialist party in Ohio. He was a frequent contributor to the *Cleveland Citizen*, the AFL paper in Cleveland, and for a time was state secretary of the Socialist party in Ohio. *New York Times*, August 26, 1943.

2. As noted, the Socialist party national convention opened in Cleveland on April 29, 1922.

3. In West Virginia.

4. A number of Debs's articles urging support for Russian famine relief appeared at this time. *New Day*, April 1, 1922; *Miami Valley Socialist*, May 19, 1922; *Worker*, March 25, 1922.

5. The business and management campaign to equate the open shop with the American Way and Americanism was denounced in "The Open Shop a Barefaced Capitalistic Fraud" in *New Day*, April 3, 1922.

EVD to Lucy Robins

May 12, 1922
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Comrade Lucy:—

I have just read with deep interest and no little concern and regret your letter of the 8th. inst. It was not my intention to question in the least your motive in the publication of your report nor with regard to any of the matter inserted in your book,[1] to some of which I felt moved to take exception. That you acted in good faith and with the best of intentions I do not doubt and in what I had to say of an adverse nature I had reference only to your judgment and to the expediency of reviving and putting in permanent form the disagreements and dissensions which were so painful to all concerned at the time they occurred.[2] At the time I wrote you I had just received the book, noted its very kind personal inscription and in glancing hastily through its pages noticed some of the matter I deemed objectionable and to which I deemed it proper in all candor to call your attention, not thinking for a moment of criticising in any harshness of spirit or in the least hurting your feelings. I took the book home with me that night and went over its pages more carefully and my first impression was sustained by a closer examination of its contents. I felt it would have been better for you and for all concerned had you ignored all those petty squabbles, written above the mean-spirited personalities and ignored entirely the aspersions cast upon you, relying upon your high motive and your faithful service to speak for themselves and to make the only defense needed against attack from any source. That is the course I have almost invariably pursued and I have found it far better in the long run than to allow myself to be embroiled in

degrading personal recrimination with those with whom I have not been in agreement. It was this mainly that I had in mind when I wrote you before but I did not lose sight of all you had done, and your associates under your inspiration, to bring comfort and relief to me and my fellow prisoners and to secure amnesty for all. I can never forget the faithful and devoted services you rendered nor shall I ever cease to be grateful for your visits to the prison and your loving ministrations to us all, myself in particular.

I hope I need not assure you that I am deeply touched by your beautiful yet ill deserved tribute which the book contains and which glows in so many of its pages.[3] You have been more than kind and generous in what you have had to say of me and my humble services and you have said it with the sweet spirit and the sincerity of conviction which reflect your own fine devotion to the cause of your imprisoned comrades. I know how hard you worked, how many difficulties you had to face and what obstacles you had to overcome and this after all will hold its place in my heart to the exclusion of all else that might even seemingly reflect upon or detract from the loving kindness and loyal devotion which inspired it. Yes, I shall read the book carefully as soon as I can find time to do it justice. At this moment I am not well, Mrs. Debs is ill, and her dear Mother is slowly breathing her last. We are all sending you greetings of love and best wishes.

As ever,

Yours faithfully,
Eugene V. Debs

TLS, InTI, Robins Papers.

1. Lucy Robins's report of the AFL amnesty campaign was made to the 1922 AFL convention in Cincinnati. The report was published under the title *War Shadows: A Documentary Story of the Struggle for Amnesty* (New York, Central Labor Bodies Conference for the Release of Political Prisoners, 1922).

2. In *War Shadows*, Robins wrote at length of "obstacles" placed in the way of her own amnesty work by Socialist party officials, particularly Otto Branstetter. Her "miserable experience with the National Officers of the Socialist Party" led her to believe that "Branstetter and his ilk are responsible for the failure of the Socialist Party" (*War Shadows*, 172).

3. A considerable part of *War Shadows* is given over to Robins's admiration of Debs, her efforts to secure his release, and his declared gratitude for her work.



The Atlanta Federal Penitentiary. Eugene V. Debs Foundation.



James Dyche, warden at the Atlanta Federal Penitentiary.



Debs and Dr. Madge Patton Stephens, a Terre Haute physician who was a member of the committee that notified Debs of his presidential nomination in 1920. Cunningham Memorial Library, Indiana State University.



Campaign poster, 1920. Eugene V. Debs Foundation.



Debs and Seymour Stedman, his 1920 running mate. Eugene V. Debs Foundation.

Debs and Lucy Robins at the Atlanta prison farm in 1921. Cunningham Memorial Library, Indiana State University.





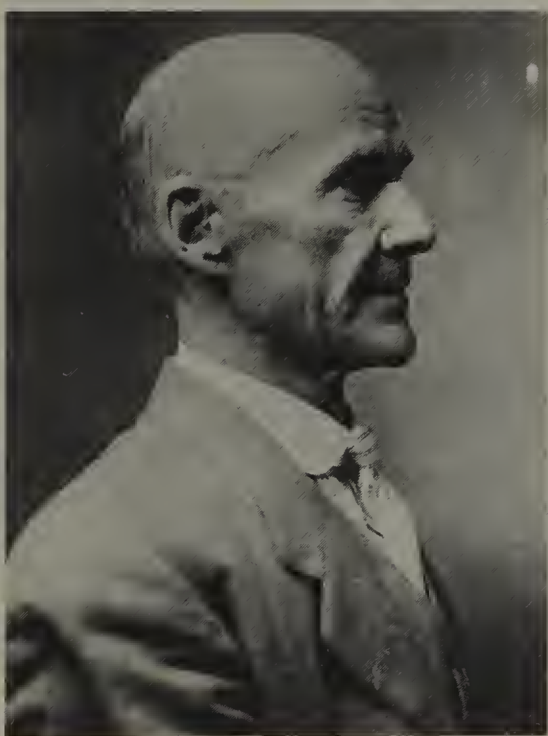
A "Free Debs" petition booth in Terre Haute, 1921. Eugene V. Debs Foundation.



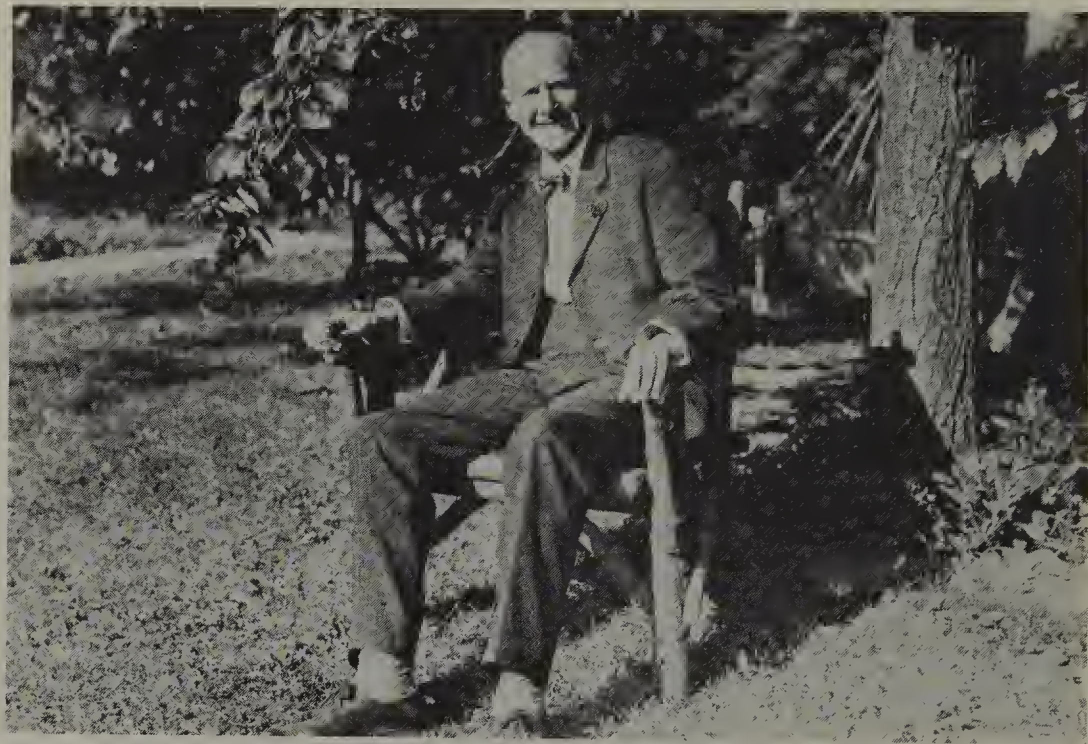
Debs at the time of his release from prison, December 1921. Eugene V. Debs Foundation.



Debs and his brother, Theodore, at the time of Gene's release from prison. Cunningham Memorial Library, Indiana State University.



Debs in early 1922, shortly after his release from prison. National Archives.



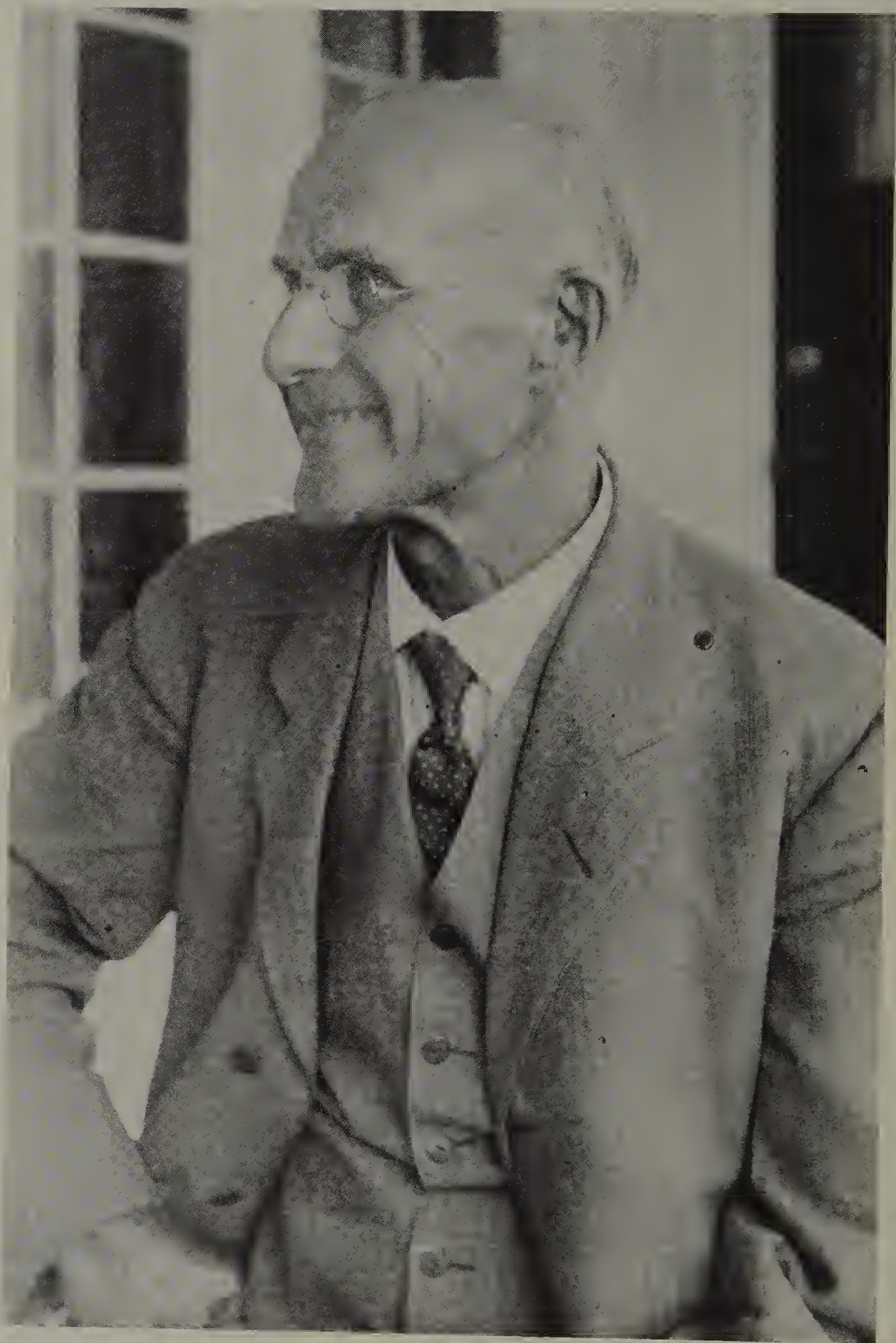
Debs at Lindlahr Sanitarium, 1922. Eugene V. Debs Foundation.



Debs speaking in Milwaukee, 1924. Victor Berger is at the far right. Eugene V. Debs Foundation.



Debs and Carl Sandburg at Lindlahr Sanitarium, 1924. Eugene V. Debs Foundation.



The last known photograph of Debs, 1926. Eugene V. Debs Foundation.

GENE DEBS IS DEAD

HONOR HIS MEMORY

BY ATTENDING A

MASS MEETING

AT

WEST SIDE TURN HALL

3907 LORAIN AVENUE

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 27, 8 P.M.

Debs Was a Member of the National Committee,
International Labor Defense

—SPEAKERS—

CHARLES CLINE—Just Released After 13 Years in Prison.
TOM CLIFFORD—Personal Life-Long Friend of Debs'.
I. AMTER—District Secretary, Workers' Party.

Chairman—CARL HACKER.
Local Secretary, International Labor Defense

ADMISSION 25c

Auspices—International Labor Defense—414 W. Superior Avenue

Memorial-service poster, 1926. Eugene V. Debs Foundation.



At Eugene V. Debs's funeral in Terre Haute were (from left) Frederick Heath, Theodore Debs, Seymour Stedman, Morris Hillquit, Tony Zender, William Cunnea, Samuel Levin, and Victor Berger. Eugene V. Debs Foundation.

EVD to Lincoln Phifer

June 5, 1922
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Lincoln:—

I am filled with strange emotion after reading your more than fine letter just received. My heart is full of it and of you. You speak in a spirit that appeals to mine and in a message my heart can understand. I only wish I could tell you what there is for you in my heart of hearts that vainly seeks expression. You are as near to me this moment as you were when I gave your case with its alarming symptoms my professional attention and stopped your breathing entirely when I presented my bill for services rendered. You are a dear, loyal comrade and friend and I loved you from the moment we first met. How my memory treasures the hours when we sat within touch of each other and worked together under a mutual inspiration to serve each other and the cause with the best we had to give! The beautiful hours, winged and care-free, spent at your lovely home where peace and content soothed like a benediction, can never be forgotten. The bounteous table at which I was privileged to sit as a guest, surrounded by your precious family, will be in my vision until the light of it goes out forever. I am not well but doing the best I can. It is nervous prostration and I am having a hard struggle to come out of it but I shall and in good time I shall be at my post again and I expect to do better work than I have yet done in the movement. Physical strength is all I need and with rest and quiet which I hope to obtain later that will come back to me as it has in the past.

I am so glad you are getting along comfortably. No one better deserves the good things that come to favored mortals than you. I always rejoice in anything that adds to your happiness.

The dream you had with Fred[1] in it and the enormous circulation must have stirred you while it lasted and I hope it will come true and that some day not too far distant you will find yourself racing with all your might in the vain effort to keep up with the circulation.

Mrs. Debs and Theodore and his wife and all of us send greetings of affection and kindest wishes to you and Mrs. Phifer and all of your family and household.

Yours always,
E. V. Debs

TLS, IN.

1. Probably Fred Warren.

[Otto Branstetter] to EVD

June 7, 1922
[Chicago, Illinois]

Dear Comrade Debs:

I have your communication of the 5th inst., enclosing article "Chicago and its "Crooked Labor Leaders"[1] for the press service. This was immediately sent out in a special press service under the date of June 6.

I wish to suggest that articles intended for the National Office Press Service should not be sent to the New York Call. Our regular press service is sent out on Saturday and is generally published in the party papers on the following Saturday. That is, articles sent out this week will appear in next week's issues. This particular article will no doubt be published in today's issue of the Call[2] and will therefore reach all Socialist and practically all sympathetic labor papers as soon, or sooner, than the press service.

It is hardly worth while to send out articles in the press service which have already been published in the Call as the party papers can reprint them sooner from the Call. I suggest that hereafter you do not send press service articles to any of the papers as all of them, including the Call, will receive the article at the same time through the press service. You can, when it is desirable, write special articles for the Call or any of the other papers which will not be sent out in the press service.

This particular article is certainly timely and is an excellent summing up and fixing of responsibility for Chicago conditions.

I understood that you and Mrs. Debs had gone off for a rest but note that your last two letters have both been dated from Terre Haute.

It may be that you are away and have forwarded these to Theodore for copying and mailing, which I hope is the case. If you are not away from Terre Haute you ought to be and I hope you will find it possible to get away somewhere for the absolute rest that is required.

With best wishes, I am

Yours fraternally,
[Otto Branstetter]
Executive Secretary.

TLc, IN.

1. In "Chicago and Its 'Crooked Labor Leaders' " (*Miami Valley Socialist*, June 9, 1922), Debs argued that Chicago's businessmen did not in fact want "honest labor

leaders," but rather wanted "lieutenants" who would do their bidding and betray union men and women.

2. Debs's article on Chicago did not appear in the *Call* until June 22, 1922.

EVD to Mabel Dunlap Curry

[July-September 1922]
Chicago, Illinois[1]

Wed 5 PM

Oh, dearest, I want you! Can't you be here? Just here for a few minutes paying my respects & they're all so glad to see me, but I want my J.J.,[2] and it keeps prodding and tormenting me and will not down. I've tried to put it away or put it off or put it out, but it will not; it simply will not. What shall I do? Can you think of anything? Will you not please use your good offices with B[3] to {have her} leave for a little while, just long enough for a little sanity to return to a hare and a hatter in me, suffering from St. Vitus Dance or Virginia Reel in the cerebellum!

The Mad Hatter, the March Hare and the Million Dollar Pony all begin with M and so does the precious name of the enchantress that brought their madness upon them.

Receiving no letter today I am very much worried. I went back to P.O. again this eve—nothing there. You reported a very bad cold—can it have gotten worse? I'm very much concerned & shall anxiously await the morrow for word. You must not fall ill. Pls. do not! I can not bear the thought of it—or of anything befalling you.

AL, InU, Lilly Library, Curry Papers.

1. This letter was written at Lindlahr Sanitarium, a nature-cure facility in the Chicago suburb of Elmhurst, Illinois, where Debs spent most of the summer and fall of 1922.

2. Debs occasionally addressed Curry as "J.J." See Debs to Curry, November 8, 1922.

3. In a letter to Rose Pastor Stokes dated May 16, 1919, Curry explained that she and Debs "have a little code. . . . We speak of ourselves as Mrs. Wilson and Mr. Brewer. He is Mrs. W. and I am Mr. B. So we can say some personal things in letters in an impersonal way." Stokes Papers, Yale University Library.

EVD to David Karsner

July 12, 1922
Terre Haute, Indiana

Dear David:

The Art Review[1] and the Engineer's Journal[2] kindly sent by you have been received and I much appreciate your kindness in sending them. I note with pleasure your article in the Review and I see in it a fine piece of your characteristic portrait work and a rare tribute to Upton Sinclair. I shall take this paper with me on my journey so that I may give it the careful and appreciative reading it so well deserves. I am just leaving for Chicago where I am to take a course in a nature cure sanitarium which has been highly commended by others more or less in my condition who have had the benefit of the treatment there. I do not know how long I shall be away, perhaps two or three months or even more but from what I have heard through those in whom I have full confidence I am satisfied that I am going to the right place for repairs and that I shall return with strength renewed and fit for service again. I have not been able to gather any strength here and I am still physically weak, my nerves worn, and my heart tired. I need the course of treatment the sanitarium prescribes. Everything known to modern curative science is applied there. It is all nature treatment. No drugs are administered. I think you might say in the Call that I am taking this course of treatment and that the comrades may not expect to hear from me until I leave the sanitarium. This will answer the many inquiries that are made and I think it due to the comrades to say this much for their information. I am intact, as I am sure you know, in spirit. I was never more thoroughly myself in all but the flesh and that can and shall be corrected and in good time I shall be at my post again with strength renewed and with capacity enlarged or at least unimpaired to serve the cause. How I would love to be in action at this hour! What a situation confronts us and what a call for service! I feel the thrill of it all but I must be patient for yet awhile and then I shall make up for every hour of inaction enforced upon me.

Katherine and Theodore and Gertrude all join me in love to our dear little great-souled David. We send you our loving thoughts each day.

Yours always,
E. V. Debs

TLS, NN Kars.

1. In "Upton Sinclair" (*Art Review*, July 1922), Karsner compared the writings of Theodore Dreiser and Sinclair and wrote that he "cannot help feel that *The Jungle* gave Sinclair a bad start by making him famous before he had reached his maturity as either artist or novelist" and that he had "often wondered how Sinclair could write so many books and not have a sense of humor which he sadly lacks."

2. In "How Morse Got Out of Jail" (*Locomotive Engineers Journal*, July 1922) Debs gave his version of the collusion and corruption involved in the release from prison of Charles Wyman Morse (1856-1933), a New York City banker, shipbuilder, and "ice magnate," who served only two years of a fifteen-year sentence at Atlanta before being pardoned by President Taft. Debs said that at Atlanta he had "heard a great deal about the Morse case," the details of which were revealed in a Senate investigation in May 1922. *New York Times*, May 21 and 22, 1922.

EVD to Theodore Debs

July 25, 1922
Chicago, Illinois

My dear Theo—

Yrs. of yesterday enclosing clipping recd—also the papers. Thanks! Yes, you're right about the visitors but it's not as easy as you think. If I'd carry out your policy they'd soon tell me to go to hell & let me alone & I'd be troubled no more. Sunday there were over 20 callers; yesterday 12; to-day so far 6 or 7. Burns (W.E.)[1] was here today; Mrs. John Lloyd[2] came this morning brought a big box of cut flowers & staid for dinner. St John Tucker just left here—leaving a book. *I saw none of them. The doctor has had to post notices that visitors can't see me.* It's hell! They simply will come in spite of everything. The enclosed letter from Barnes[3] is answered & in plain terms. Please file it. I made no promise conditional or otherwise to attend the picnic & he knew it & I told him so. In Sunday's Herald they announced me as the principal speaker at the picnic. They did not consult me. It was an outrage and I have told them what I thought of it. They have moved heaven & earth to get me to that picnic & I have told them flatly I would not attend. Barnes went to Dr. Lindlahr at the City Sanitarium[4] & got a written certificate from him giving them permission to come here & see me & also giving me permission to speak at the picnic—Then Barnes telephoned here of the permission they had and said they were coming out to see me. I at once told the Doctor here I would refuse to see them & he took charge of the matter. They came out in an auto, Barnes, Mrs. White[5] & I don't know who else & the Doctor simply told them they could not see me and that settled it. From now on the Doctor will give callers to understand that my

condition will not allow of my seeing visitors & he will not admit them—Enclosed letter from Jewish Forward[6] just recd. by special delivery. Pls. drop them a line of thanks & say that Doctor has been compelled to decline visitors until I am in an improved condition. I shall now buckle down to getting well—Love to you & Gertrude & Marguerite. The rest I'll take out of your hide.

Your loving old pard
Gene

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. William E. Burns served as director of the American Railway Union. He was living in Chicago at the time.
2. In a letter to Adolph Germer, October 10, 1940, Theodore Debs described "an old timer, John Lloyd, now living in New York, who was one of the organizers of the Social Democracy, back in 1897." WHi, Germer Papers.
3. Probably J. Mahlon Barnes, formerly national secretary of the Socialist party, who had recently taken office as secretary of the Cook County local of the party. *Miami Valley Socialist,* May 26, 1922.
4. Dr. Henry Lindlahr (1862-1924) was the founder and director of Lindlahr Sanitarium in Elmhurst and of a similar facility in Chicago.
5. Bertha Hale White.
6. The *Jewish Daily Forward,* a Yiddish-language paper founded in New York in 1897, was one of the strongest voices of labor and socialism among New York's immigrant workers; it was a longtime friend and supporter of Debs. Under the editorship of Abraham Cahan, the *Forward*'s circulation reached 250,000, and a Chicago edition of the paper was launched in 1925.

David Karsner to Theodore Debs

July 27, 1922
[New York City]

Dear Theodore:

Enclosed please find original cablegram of Tchernoff[1] with copies of cablegrams to Lenin[2] and Tchernoff. Also enclosed is the Debs' story relating to the above items.[3]

Replying to your personal note to me—I kept no memorandum of the amount of money received from Gene personally during my month's work on the Atlanta articles, but my memory is fairly active in such matters and I believe I received from Gene $200 in addition to the $150. from the Bell Syndicate before I left New York. If I remember correctly, the $200 received from Gene was given in two $50. payments and $100 the day I left Terre Haute.[4]

I have received no inquiry from Mr. Wheeler[5] in reference to this

but, of course, will be only too willing to tell him what the situation was.

Referring once more to the matter of the cables, this was attended to after a conference with Ervin, Oneal and Walker, as per your instructions.[6]

Love to you always,
[David Karsner]

TLc, NN Kars.

1. Viktor Mikhailovich Chernov (1873-1952) was the leader of the anti-Bolshevik Social Revolutionary party in Russia and an opponent of the Soviet regime there. In 1920, Chernov was expelled from the Soviet Union and in June 1922, thirty-four leaders of the Social Revolutionary party were tried in Moscow on charges of terrorism and counterrevolutionary activity. Fifteen were sentenced to death but the death sentences were commuted to terms of imprisonment. The 1922 trials virtually ended the party's existence in Russia. In his cable to Debs (*Call*, July 27, 1922), Chernov asked Debs to "raise the voice of American Socialists" against the execution of the Social Revolutionary party members.

2. Debs's cablegram to Lenin protested "with all civilized people in the name of our common humanity against the execution of any of the Social-Revolutionaries or the unjust denial of their liberty." *Call*, July 27, 1922.

3. "Debs Plea to Lenin," *Call*, July 27, 1922.

4. In a note to Karsner ca. July 27, 1922, Theodore Debs asked about "the amount Gene paid you here in Terre Haute." He was "under the impression it was $250." InTI, Debs Collection.

5. John Neville Wheeler (1886-1973) was the founder in 1913 of the Wheeler Syndicate and in 1916 of the Bell Literary Syndicate, which, as noted, distributed Debs's prison articles.

6. In a letter to Karsner dated July 24, 1922, Theodore Debs, in discussing the proposed cablegram from Debs to Lenin, advised Karsner to "call Ervin, Oneal and Ryan Walker in counsel and formulate an answer and send it over his name." He then suggested the wording of the cablegram, which was carefully followed, and asked Karsner to send a second cablegram to Chernov in Berlin. InTI, Debs Collection.

EVD to David Karsner

July 30, 1922
Chicago, Illinois

My dear David,

The first page of the Call has just been received with your very kind letter. Please accept my best thanks and tender the same to Comrades Ervin, Oneal and Walker for the prompt and very satisfactory manner in which you handled the matter of the cable to Moscow. I need hardly say that I very much appreciate the splendid

service you have rendered me and the generous consideration shown me in presenting the matter to your readers.

Branstetter writes me that agents of the Associated Press and the United Press called on him for full copies of the message from Berlin and to Moscow[1] and I referred him to the Call. I had no idea the plute press would have any interest in the matter.

Now if you have not sent the bill of charges to Theo. as I requested him to have you do, please let me know the amount and I will remit.

Thanking you all many times and with love as always I am

Yours forever
E. V. Debs

Have a vigorous protest from a Communist Editor about the cable to Moscow. I shall answer him. If we believe {in and inflict} a capitalist punishment and commit murder in the cause of justice, as the capitalists do, we are not a damned bit better than they whose system we condemn as criminal and whose ethics we renounce as barbarous and inhuman.

The social revolutionaries are charged with attempting the assassination of Lenin. If they were not only charged with but actually guilty of attempting to assassinate me instead of Lenin my attitude would be the same. I would punish them with liberty.

Writing a funeral address for an old friend[2] who has just died at T.H. and must get it off right away.

Please land lustily on Ryan Walker and charge to my account.

Later—This moment recd. Call page of 28th. with your interesting and to me very flattering column and comment.[3] You're a flowing fountain of love & kindness

Thanks and Love!

ALS, NN Kars.

1. As noted, Chernov's message to Debs from Berlin and Debs's to Lenin were published in the *Call* on July 27, 1922.

2. Dr. Charles F. Gerstmeyer, a Terre Haute physician who was a close friend of Debs and had written one of the essays for *What Debs' Neighbors Say About Him,* died on July 27, 1922. Gerstmeyer "expressed a desire that Eugene V. Debs, for whom he had great admiration, deliver the funeral address but the illness of Mr. Debs, who is in a Chicago sanitarium, prevents the carrying out of this desire." *Terre Haute Tribune,* July 28, 1922.

3. In his "Here There and Everywhere" column in the *Call* on July 28, 1922, Karsner described Debs's cable to Lenin as "one of the noblest gestures that the great humanist ever made in behalf of human decency and social tolerance."

EVD to Otto Branstetter

August 3, [1922]
Chicago, Illinois

My dear Comrade Branstetter,

Your note of yesterday enclosing clipping from Christian Monitor containing a purported interview with Mrs. Stokes and Jim Larkin has been Received.[1] Please accept my thanks. Some of the interview is true and some is not. I do not know how they got it. The interviews were personal and not official and I so treated them and said nothing about them for publication. Whether any information touching the interviews was given out by Mrs. Stokes to Larkin I do not know.

Under the circumstances I prefer not to be quoted in reference to the statement and I am not responsible for it and can not authenticate it. For the same reason I would rather you made no use of it.

I am making a little progress but it will take time to rest my nerves, so I can sleep, and restore my strength and energy. It is not easy, I assure you, to submit to this when my heart is out in the struggle and I yearn to have my place in it.

With love to you all as always

Yours faithfully
E. V. Debs

I have taken the liberty to keep the clipping.

ALS, IN.

1. The *Christian Science Monitor* story of July 21, 1922, described a recent visit by Rose Pastor Stokes to Debs in Terre Haute. Stokes "bore an invitation to Debs to visit Russia" and "urged Debs to affiliate with the forces of communism in this country," but Debs replied that he was "unqualifiedly opposed to communism [which] has not a single constructive plank in its entire platform." The story added that "Jimmy Larkins" of New York had also visited Debs in Terre Haute "to discuss the uncomplimentary reports concerning the members of the Communist movement" but gave no details of Larkins's meeting with Debs. Debs's friend James Larkin was, as noted, in prison in New York at the time and was not released by Governor Al Smith until 1923.

EVD to Theodore Debs

August 5, [1922]
Chicago, Illinois

My dearest old Pard,

When August comes I think of your birthday and this morning I have you in my arms and loving and congratulating you with my

whole heart. It was a fine day for the world, old pard, when you were ushered into it and but for that beautiful visit I should have missed, very, very much, more far than you know, of what has enriched and blessed my life. So I give you my heart full of congratulations this morning and pray there may be eternal and increasingly happy returns of the day.

You and Gertrude must eat plenty of raw vegetables and remember that [there] is great virtue in all kinds of *fruit juices* and nuts. You should use postum instead of coffee—it's just as good & has grain nourishment. I've cut out salt entirely—slowly I can feel the poisons being eliminated from my blood. The weakness and incessant pain in my back is gradually leaving, the palpitation in my heart subsiding, my kidneys improving, & my general condition growing better day by day. I am *scrupulously* following the program {and} it is all *action* & keeps me going from 5 or 5 30 A M to 9. I miss nothing in the regimen. I love everybody here & they [several illegible words] I wish you and Gertrude and Marguerite could be here. Dr. Lindlahr has invited Kate to come & I've urged & urged her but she insists she is doing so well, improving each day, & that she's sure she will soon be quite well, and that she'd rather take care of things at home. You're all in my heart all the time. Kiss dear Gertrude & Marguerite for me.

Your everlasting, loving old pard
Gene

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

Theodore Debs to Comrade Engdahl

August 9, 1922
Terre Haute, Indiana

Dear Comrade Engdahl:

Your letter to Gene of the 3rd. inst. enclosing a copy of the Worker containing a marked article[1] addressed to him duly reached him and has been forwarded to me for attention. Gene is sick and undergoing treatment and in his condition and situation he is unable to give personal attention to matters of this kind but he directs me to make answer to you as follows: He has no statement to make. The cablegram to Moscow speaks for itself. It requires no explanation. It states his position and by that he stands. The attempt to make him appear the enemy of Lenine and the Soviet Government in face of the fact that from the hour that government was born he proclaimed himself its

friend and has stood by it and defended and extolled Lenine and Trotzsky in every word uttered and written, is too false and silly to merit attention. Your indictment of the social revolutionaries is complete but there is another side and you make no mention of it. In the conflict between the bolsheviki and the social revolutionaries the wild excesses were not confined to one side, as you would have it appear—the social revolutionaries were the victims as well as the perpetrators of outrages, and if they had been victorious and were now trying the bolsheviki for high crimes in their courts with conviction as a foregone conclusion Gene would protest against their execution as he does now against that of the social revolutionaries. He does not believe in revenge, in capital punishment, in cold-blooded murder, and these brutal passions and atrocious crimes are all the more reprehensible in his eyes when committed in the name of law and justice by socialists who have for years {been} denouncing capitalism for these identical infamies. If we believe in bloodthirsty revenge, in cruel reprisals and savage killings to satisfy our law and ethics, we are even lower than the capitalists and their mercenary hangmen who at least make no pretense of such humane ideals as we profess and shamelessly betray the moment we succeed to power. It will be insisted that the execution of the defendants in the case is a revolutionary necessity. Gene denies it! He is convinced that the murder of these men would betray the weakness and fear of the Soviet Government and bring it into contempt all over the world among people who now give it their allegiance and support. To be great enough, human enough and generous enough to punish these men with their liberty instead of the hangman's halter would be the civilized method of dealing with them, thus setting up the higher ethical standard we profess and thereby commanding the confidence and respect of the whole world. The Soviet Government has nothing more to fear from these defendants. Let it set them an example in Soviet morality and humanity and even the bitterest enemies of the Soviet Government will be to that extent disarmed and silenced.

Gene does not defend the acts of the social revolutionaries. He pleads for their lives as he would if they were the vilest criminals on earth, and if they had attempted to assassinate him instead of Lenine his attitude would be the same. From the standpoint of mere policy, leaving out the question of human life, mercy instead of {revenge} at this time would be infinitely the wiser course for the Soviet Government; and as a loyal supporter of Lenine, Trotzsky and the Soviet Government he fervently hopes they will pursue that course.

Gene wishes me to say to you that personally he owes nothing to the communists. When he was in that hell-hole at Atlanta the com-

munists with but few exceptions ignored him and the rest of the political prisoners, and their papers, including the one you now edit, were cold-bloodedly silent, not raising a voice nor lifting a finger to secure their release, and so far as they are concerned Gene would still be rotting, were he alive, in his dungeon in Atlanta. You are at liberty to publish[2] what is here said and if you do kindly send me a marked copy.

Gene wishes me to thank you sincerely for your message of personal kindness and to send you his cordial regards and best wishes, to which I take the liberty to add my own.

Yours fraternally,
Theodore Debs

TLS, IN.

1. In "Questions to Debs" (*Worker,* August 12, 1922), J. Louis Engdahl, who had left the Socialist party and was now editor of the Workers (Communist) party weekly, the *Worker,* wrote that, in writing to Lenin on behalf of the Social Revolutionaries on trial in Moscow, Debs "takes his stand temporarily on the side of Tchernovv and against Lenin."

2. This letter from Theodore Debs to Engdahl was published in the *Worker* on August 26, 1922.

EVD to David Karsner

August 22, [1922]
Chicago, Illinois

My dear David,

Your letter is beautiful and your article is fine[1] and both give me inexpressible satisfaction. Thank you, dear David, with all my heart. I'd love to say a good deal more but have not a chance. The mail increases day by day and I can't take care of it.

Sinclair Lewis[2] is here and will be here for ten days. He's great and fine and I can't tell you how I love him. Last night for the first time I had to break one [of] the Sanitarium rules. I was with Carl Sandburg and Sinclair Lewis at the Sandburg house[3] till midnight, and then that beautiful brace of great white souls brought me home. It was a wonderful occasion—an event in our lives. Mrs. Sandburg and her Mother and the three dear children[4] did the hospitable and we were in paradise after our own hearts. You were of course with us. Lewis and Sandburg love you just as I do. Sinclair Lewis will stay here until he is fed up in a way to satisfy him. He has the all-seeing eye and the all understanding soul & nothing escapes him.

Carl gave me his poems inscribed by himself and Lewis in a way to make me blush red with humility. Carl came with his guitar Saturday eve & gave the patients here a most cheering entertainment in folk-lore etc. It was a complete conquest & they all love him. Lewis will also entertain them and the patients here feel big with importance. No "Main streeters" here.

Love dear, David always
Gene

ALS, NN Kars.

1. Karsner's column, "Here There And Everywhere" in the *Call*, August 2, 1922, was given over largely to a description of Debs's routine at Lindlahr Sanitarium.
2. Harry Sinclair Lewis (1885-1951) wrote short stories for the *Saturday Evening Post* and a half-dozen novels before publishing *Main Street* (1920) and *Babbitt* (1922), which transformed him into an international literary figure and were largely responsible, along with *Arrowsmith* (1925) and *Elmer Gantry* (1927), for his winning the Nobel Prize in literature in 1930.
3. Sandburg called his home in Elmhurst Happiness House. He was an editorial writer on the *Chicago Daily News* at the time.
4. Sandburg's wife, Lillian Steichen Sandburg, was the sister of the famous photographer Edward Steichen. Their daughters were Helga, Janet, and Margaret. Mary Kemp Steichen was Sandburg's mother-in-law.

EVD to Lucy Robins

August 26, 1922
Elmhurst, Illinois

My dear Comrade Lucy:

I understand perfectly and I am not surprised nor do I blame you in the least. You have been quite frank as I wish every one to be with whom I have comradely or other relations. It would take a long letter to tell you even a fraction of the difficulties and restrictions under which the prison articles were written, and I am in no condition here in a sanitarium under treatment and warned constantly by my physician to quit all correspondence until I get stronger, to write such a letter. Nor is it really necessary. Did it not occur to you that those articles were written for *capitalist* papers and that they dictated the kind of articles they would publish and what they wanted and what they did not want, and that I either had to write within the limitations they prescribed or have them exclude the articles entirely? Even at that many changes were made, some matter was stricken out and of the twelve articles written only nine were published. They wanted

nothing about the amnesty campaign in those articles—they had no use for that, as you must certainly know from your own experience, and the amnesty campaign and those who conducted it could have no place in those articles. Then again, if I could have written about amnesty I could not have mentioned one without mentioning all and you will realize how utterly out of the question that would have been. The mean, bitter, malicious jealousy and spite which developed among the various factions made it an extremely difficult matter for me to deal with from the moment I left prison to this hour, and I hope with all my heart to be delivered from ever again having to pass through such a terrible and to me ofttimes disgusting experience. No matter which way I turned I offended some one, and if I said a kind word about one comrade some other was sure to take offense and claim he did the work and was ignored instead of being praised etc. etc. It is all so petty and debasing that I want to get far above it and refuse to have anything to do with that kind of backbiting and disgraceful business. It is foreign to my nature, I feel degraded by contact with it, and yet I have to be, sick and weak as I have been and still am, in the very centre of these miserable contentions and mud-slingings, and this has had its full share in preventing me from recovering my health. Now as to having ignored you and your associates and your activities, I cannot understand that at all. I have made my most grateful acknowledgments to you direct and through my brother over and over again and you have them published in a score or more of pages in your book, and let me say that many of these were made in the face of violent protest by party members and others who brought accusations against you and declared that I was betraying the party in giving you, who were charged with conspiring against the party, such high testimonials. I made not a few enemies on that score.

The point you make in regard to President Gompers coming to the prison[1] I cannot think of any consequence at all. I wrote it just as the Warden gave it to me and if I did not put it in the way you wished it written it was only because I did not have sufficient egotism to say specifically that President Gompers had come to the prison for the express purpose of seeing me.[2] I simply can not agree with you that I should have called attention to my self-importance in any such way. All through the articles I kept myself out as much as I possibly could, not wishing to blow my own personal trumpet and this accounts for my having written as I did about President Gomper's visit and {not} because I so much as dreamed of slighting him or you.

I have gone over the ground as fully as the circumstances will allow, and I have said all I have to say upon this matter. I should have written so long a letter to no one else.

I appreciate and shall always remember your kindness and devotion while I was in prison, the hard work you did and every effort you put forth in our behalf; I am also deeply touched by the beautiful things, all too generous, you wrote about me in your book,[3] and I shall never forget one loving service you ever rendered us political prisoners. For all of this I thank you with all my heart, and the rest that caused so much pain and ill feeling I shall shut out and forget as if it had never been.

And now wishing you well in every way in the world, and with love and kindest remembrances to you and all your associates I remain as ever

Yours faithfully,
Eugene V. Debs

TLS, InTI, Debs Papers.

1. Gompers visited the Atlanta prison on September 16, 1921, and held a "twenty minute conference" with Debs in the warden's office. *New York Times,* September 17, 1921. After their meeting, according to *New Day,* October 8, 1921, "Gompers gave out a statement in which he declared that there is neither justice nor necessity in longer denying Eugene V. Debs his freedom." In David Karsner's *Talks With Debs in Terre Haute* (1922), which was based on Karsner's conversations with Debs during the period in which the prison articles were being written, Gompers's visit to the prison was described as the result of the warden's invitation to Gompers "to address the convict body in the auditorium of the penitentiary after which he met Debs in the office of the warden." Debs recalled the meeting as a friendly one in which "we just spoke of generalities and I went back to my duties in the hospital." Karsner, *Talks With Debs,* 59-60.

2. In the fourth of the "Inside Prison Walls" articles (*Washington Times,* July 2, 1922), Debs listed Gompers among other visitors to Atlanta and noted only that Gompers had come at the invitation of the warden, that he had "addressed the convicts," and that "we enjoyed a brief visit in the office of the warden."

3. In *War Shadows* (p. 192), Robins wrote that "a smile from Debs was like a blessing to the prisoners. Only Christ could have smiled in that way." The book contained a number of such tributes to Debs.

Theodore Debs to William Z. Foster[1]

August 26, 1922
Terre Haute, Indiana

Dear Comrade Foster:

My brother has read of your brutal and shameless persecution[2] with feelings of deepest indignation and resentment and wishes me to write to you as follows: "If I were not confined to a sanitarium

under treatment I would at once be with you and tender my services in any way in my power. The miserable wretches in Colorado and Wyoming, especially the capitalist hireling who masquerades as governor of the former state,[3] who so brutally manhandled you in the name of law and order, have sown dragons' teeth from which will spring in due time the warriors of the revolution who will sweep the corrupt system of which they are the servile lackeys from the face of the earth.

You are to be congratulated, after all, upon the infamous outrages perpetrated upon you in the name of capitalist law and justice, for in these outrages, committed by their liveried hirelings, is revealed the fear of their thieving and brutal masters, and this is the highest compliment they could possibly pay you. They know you cannot be bought, bribed or bullied, and so they set their dogs at your heels to drive you off their reservation.

I need not sympathize with you nor bid you be strong for you have the strength to stand and withstand, and you need no sympathy, and all I have to say is that when I have recovered my strength sufficiently to take up my work again, I shall be with you shoulder to shoulder in your stand for the working class and industrial freedom, and meanwhile I am

Yours fraternally,"
Eugene V. Debs[4]

Please let me concur heartily in the above sentiments of my brother and to also subscribe myself, with great respect and all good wishes.

Yours fraternally,
Theodore Debs

TLS (typed signature with signed note from Theodore Debs), IN.

1. William Zebulon Foster (1881-1961) was a member of the IWW and secretary of the Syndicalist League of North America before World War I and rose to national prominence as leader of the historic and unsuccessful steel strike in 1919. In 1920 he organized and became national secretary of the Trade Union Educational League (TUEL), through which he sought to radicalize the American labor movement, and in 1922 he joined the Workers party and was that party's candidate for president in 1924 (and the successor Communist Party of America candidate in 1928 and 1932). Foster was national chairman of the Communist party from 1930 to 1957. He died in Moscow in 1961.

2. In "Foster's Own Story" (*Worker,* August 26, 1922), Foster wrote that while in Denver for a lecture engagement he was "kidnapped" by state troopers, who took him to Wyoming, where the authorities in turn took him to the Nebraska border, where he caught a train to Omaha. This "act of revenge," Foster thought, was a result of his efforts to unionize the miners "in the great steel campaign of 1919."

3. Oliver Henry Nelson Shoup (1869-1940) was the Republican governor of Colorado from 1919 to 1923.
4. Debs's letter to Foster was printed in the *Worker* on September 30, 1922.

[Otto Branstetter] to EVD

September 2, 1922
[Chicago, Illinois]

Dear Comrade Debs:
I am just in receipt of a communication from Irwin St. John Tucker enclosing the following announcement which he requests me to publish in the next issue of The Socialist World:

> *ANNOUCEMENT BY EUGENE V. DEBS.*
> "The 'Statement' being circulated that I have no connection with the Magazine that bears my name does harm and injustice both to myself and to the Editors of the Magazine.
> "Since my release from prison I have been the Chief Contributing Editor of 'Debs Magazine,' and shall continue to be so.
> "I am in constant touch with its Editors and am very much interested in its success as a propaganda organ."
> (signed) Eugene V. Debs.

I do not question Tucker's honesty in this matter and have no doubt that you issued the statement as he claims, but you have so often protested against the publication of anything purporting to come from you or expressing your views without your personal instructions that I feel it is necessary to consult you before publishing the statement.

More especially as this seems in part to be a direct contradiction of a letter which Theodore sent to Drake last winter, a copy of which he forwarded to me at that time. Theodore's letter contains the following:

> "The name the magazine now bears, clearly indicating that it is Gene's magazine, is misleading and he would never have consented to it had he been consulted in regard to it, which he was not. We can scarcely understand such a method of procedure and it is surprising to say the least. Gene was eagerly desirous of helping the magazine, feeling very grateful for its past splendid services, but why should this desire be taken advantage of in a way to further complicate the extremely difficult position he is already in?
> "You announce him as the 'Chief Contributor,' virtually the

editor or the equivalent of editorship, to which he would not have consented had the matter been mentioned to him, which it was not. This announcement is wholly unauthorized and there are other announcements that will certainly offend and bring protest from The Call and other socialist publications whose requests have been declined and who will have good right to feel, upon the basis of your announcement, that to favor his own personal organ, Gene has granted liberties and complied with demands which have been denied to them."

It is difficult for me to reconcile the statement contained in the announcement furnished me by Tucker that "since my release from prison I have been the Chief Contributing Editor of the 'Debs Magazine' " with the above statement and the statement you made to our committee when we saw you shortly after your release.

My opinion that you were not connected with the Debs Magazine was based upon these statements, a mistake which I feel was excusable under the circumstances.

Please understand I have no objection to publishing your statement, however, and will do so if you will notify me immediately that it is your desire.

The August number of the Socialist World is practically made up and we go to press within the next few days, so please give this your immediate attention and let me know your wishes in the matter.

Yours fraternally,
[*Otto Branstetter*]
Executive Secretary

TLc, IN.

David Karsner to EVD

September 4, 1922
New York City

My Dear Gene:—

For a long while I have wanted to write a real portrait of Theodore, for he is one of the most interesting and at same time loveable men that I ever met. Of course I see him as your brother, but if there were no blood ties between you, there would still be a relation that transcends every influence of physical kinship. The other night I began the portrait of Theodore, but I was so pressed for time with other

work crowding in upon me that I could not complete it—did not anywhere near complete it—and I decided to let what I had written go in The Call as a Labor Day contribution.[1] It constitutes only an introduction of what I would say about Theodore if I were writing a portrait—and some day I mean to give myself that pleasure. I mean to sweep his full length and present {him} as I have seen him and known him. I hope neither you nor Theodore will think I am presuming too much in writing this way about him. If I have blundered it is at least from good motives, and that alone may save my hide and keep it intact, for Theodore has threatened to visit it with dire punishment. Luckily the distances separate us, but they are all that do. The other day, I took your cue and sent Sinclair Lewis a copy of my "Debs." I hope he received it. Just before Mrs. Curry and Mrs. Prevey left New York I had a great evening with them. I was invited for supper, and outraged all the amenities and violated all manners by staying until three in the morning—but God! what an evening with those two noble and beautiful women. If we left anything unsaid in putting this world on an even keel and helping it to get acquainted with itself I don't know what it was.

Love to you always,
Dave.

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. In his "Here There and Everywhere" column in the *Call*, September 4, 1922, Karsner described and praised Theodore Debs's services to Debs. Theodore was, Karsner wrote, "satisfied to be silent when the multitudes cheer his elder brother."

EVD to David Karsner

ca. September 5, 1922
Elmhurst, Illinois

My dear "Davy"

It's perfectly wonderful that you're writing another "Debs."[1] You've long ago exhausted the subject—How in the world do you do it? I fear you'll be disappointed for your labors. But it's mighty fine of you and my heart sings gratefully at the thought of you or the mention of your name.

P.S. Dearest David,

This moment received your loving message and your beautiful picture of Theodore for which I thank you from a full heart. It is so

sweet and fine and true, and I can not tell you what happiness your wonderful appreciation of the dearest brother in the world gives me. There is no other like him—there couldn't be. He is by far the better part of me. He is and does the thing for which I get the applause. It's because you love Theodore as you do that I love you as I do. A thousand thanks with my heart in them all!

It was very thoughtful in you to send a copy of your book to Sinclair Lewis and I thank you for doing so. He will be glad to have it for he expressed the desire to have a copy.

AL, NN Kars.

1. Karsner had written *Talks With Debs in Terre Haute* (New York: New York Call Co., 1922). As noted, the book was based on Karsner's recollections of his conversations with Debs in March and April 1922 when he was in Terre Haute assisting in the preparation of Debs's series of articles on his prison experiences and his ideas on prison reform.

EVD to David Karsner

September 9, [1922]
Elmhurst, Illinois

Dear, sweet David,

When I hear from you it is always in loving kindness. The village postmaster has just handed me the latest book from your hands bearing the love in which it was sent in its flattering inscription, and I thank you utterly with the wish that I could think of at least some little thing in return for the big and beautiful things without number you have been doing for me these many years. I am keen on "The Trail of the White Mule"[1] in zestful anticipation of an early conquest but as to his being "stabled in Terre Haute"—well, if there's a cranny anywhere without his stall I don't know where it could be found unless it would be in Ryan Walker's festive imagination. Anyway, I shall read the book, and coming from you, it will of course be with profit and joy.

Sorry to say that Sinclair Lewis was called East before your book and letter came. I had a beautiful farewell letter from him saying he would see me soon after I got back to Terre Haute. Carl Sandburg is forwarding to him your book and letter. He is a great-souled genius and one of the choicest spirits I have ever known. He is just a big, beautiful boy, free as air and natural as sunshine, and Theodore and I both loved him at sight. Lewis and Sandburg are fit companions,

genial, fun-loving, whole-hearted and generous, as well as princes of the pen and masters of {the} literary art. Lewis and Sandburg as distinctively American novelist and poet with the cosmic understanding and the universal appeal have already acquitted themselves with enviable distinction and achieved enduring fame, but they are still in their adolescence and have but laid the foundation of the temple that will bear in fadeless letters their deathless names.

We had some wonderful sessions here and you should have been at each roll-call. We settled all the great questions of the day with ease and dispatch, and in the plans we laid the sidereal universe will rank as a small concern. We sped in our flight "from star to star as far as the universe spreads its flaming walls," and infinitely beyond in our dreams and aspirations, and {we} decided to remain here until they are all triumphantly realized. God smiled, I know, for he put us up to it and he knew that we knew that he would stand loyally by and see us safely into the radiant realisms of our rosiest dreams. Yes, dear David, you missed it for we were loaded with riches and soared among the stars—while it lasted—and that was long enough to keep our spirits attuned to the infinite and our torches flaming forever.

With my love in my heart, dear little brother o' mine

Yours always
E. V. Debs

ALS, NN Kars.

1. Karsner had sent Debs a copy of Bertha Muzzy Bowers's *The Trail of the White Mule* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1922) and had written in the front, "Dear Gene—Since Terre Haute is the place where the White Mule is stalked I don't see why you should [not] have this book." The book was one of those given by Debs to the Rand School and is now in the Tamiment Library at New York University. *Tamiment Institute Library Bulletin,* December 1961.

EVD to Lucy Robins

September 9, [1922]
Elmhurst, Illinois

My dear Lucy,

Your letter has come and I have given it careful reading and consideration. I can not answer as you are kind enough to understand, but I can at least say that nothing could have been farther from my intention at any time than to do you or Mr. Gompers injustice, or to give hurt to your feelings. I am quite ready to believe that the visit

of Sam and yourself could have been much better written, but if you know under what circumstances the articles were prepared and that I was so ill at times, and tired and worn, that I could scarcely hold up my head, I am sure you would make full allowance for all shortcomings. The visit of Gompers and his earnest efforts in behalf of amnesty for all politicals I appreciated in good faith, setting aside all else about which we had differed, and I have had occasion more than once since to repeat my expression of appreciation to those who disliked Gompers and protested against any credit being given to him. Of course there are narrow minds we have to deal with and we expect to be criticized and condemned by some, no matter how consistently we do our work or how faithfully we serve the cause.

As to yourself, Lucy, I have only to say again that all the unhappy incidents connected with your work are blotted from memory, and I think only of your patient, persistent efforts in behalf of the political prisoners, of the pleas you so impressively made in my behalf before trade union conservatives, conferences with public officials, and on all possible occasions of the anxiety you suffered, the trials you had to undergo and the privations you endured—all this I remember, including each of your welcome visits to the prison with your arms filled with loving and substantial evidence of your kindness and your steadfast devotion—your messages of good cheer, your intercessions with the Warden, your gladness in making my lot a little more comfortable and your sadness and tears as you took your departure leaving us behind—yes, dear child, I remember and shall remember it all, not forgetting the touching and all too generous personal tributes in your book, and with renewed thanks and appreciation and love to you and to all your faithful associates in the good work, I am as ever

Yours sincerely
E. V. Debs

ALS, InTI, Robins Papers.

EVD to David Karsner

September 11, [1922]
Elmhurst, Illinois

My dear D.K.,

How could you think such a thing! Do you not know that it is utterly beyond you to do anything to Theo or me that is for us and can you doubt our faith in your unalterably loyal devotion? Were you

here, my lad, and court in session, ninety-nine years would be your irreducible minimum. You did not hear from Theo. because the rascal ran away—blew in here and came near inciting a riot, and only Gertrude and Marguerite saved him from a sentence to the sanitarium. The scamp finally purloined my B.V.D's which he has just returned with an apology which will avail him nothing when I get the kinks out of my anatomy and get in working order again.

As for myself, I was delayed in writing on account of an unusually strenuous and exacting program including special treatment which kept me fully occupied. But you have my letter by now with at least a feeble expression of my affection. It was a beautiful thing for you to do and you did it in your usual beautiful and gracious way. It was better to me a thousand times than purest gold and set my heart aglow with greater love for you, dear "Davy," and sweeter pride in the noblest brother that ever brothered a brother in all the files of time.

You know that Theodore has all his life been big sister to a little brother to me, and that we have been pals, one and inseparable, since the day he was born. Coming from you this beautiful tribute, this garland of roses from the garden of your love is sweet and precious indeed and will touch every responsive chord in Theodore's tender and devoted heart.

You are truly a magical worker. How do you manage to do it all? I thought the book only started and here you have it finished. My only fear is that the subject is not important enough to merit such generous treatment. You are certainly doing your loyal best, dear David, to turn my little alley into a great Broadway.

The treatment house is calling and I must leave off—but my heart stays with you. Don't wait for me to see the M.S. or anything. You know I have full faith in you and all you do. Go right along with my unqualified approval in advance. I feel certain that Emanuel Julius[1] can give the book a great circulation.

My flag's at half mast since Gertrude, Theo. and Marguerite went home but Katherine will be here soon.

Wish you could spend an evening with us at Sandburg's. It's a sure-enough little heaven. Carl & his wife and those wonderful little Sandburgs are the choicest of comrades and sweetest of souls.

Love to "Ryanie" and all the rest!

My love to you—pressed down and spilling over.

E. V. D.

ALS, NN Kars.

1. Emanuel Haldeman-Julius (1889-1951) worked on the socialist *New York Call*

and the *Milwaukee Leader* before purchasing in 1919 the *Appeal to Reason* and launching the "Little Blue Book" series, which eventually made his reputation and fortune. The "Little Blue Books," small (3½-by-5-inch) paperback books by the world's leading writers, included hundreds of titles and eventually sold for five cents a copy. The sale of 500,000,000 copies of the books made Haldeman-Julius known as "the Henry Ford of publishing." In 1916, Emanuel Julius married Anna Marcet Haldeman, daughter of a wealthy Girard, Kansas physician, and prefixed her maiden surname to his own as a concession to his wife's advocacy of women's rights. In 1923, Haldeman-Julius changed the *Appeal to Reason*'s name to *Haldeman-Julius Weekly.* As noted, Karsner's *Talks With Debs* was published by the New York Call Co., not by Haldeman-Julius.

EVD to David Karsner

September 18, [1922]
Elmhurst, Illinois

My dear David,

Your appreciation is great as the service was slight. I shall have to live long and serve you good comrades and the *Call*[1] well and often to make even a fair beginning at balancing our account. I would love to do a thousand times more and my pleasure would increase in the doing. Carl Sandburg was here and took supper with me last night. He brought me another volume of his poems beautifully inscribed. Sinclair Lewis has just sent me his "Babbitt" with a loving inscription.

I spent yesterday, Sunday, afternoon very delightfully with Mrs. Chaplin, the noble wife of Ralph and their beautiful boy Ivan.[2] Seymour Stedman and his wife, Carl Haessler[3] and his wife and baby, Costello[4] and other comrades were there, and Mrs. Chaplin served a beautiful dinner in their lovely bungalow at Lombard, four miles west of here. It is the first time I have been out of Elmhurst since coming here. We had a most interesting and enjoyable afternoon we shall all remember. Mrs. Chaplin is certainly the worthy and loyal mate of her gifted and heroic husband. She says you always remember to send her what is of special interest to her in the *Call.* Please see that she gets my article on Ralph's case. Kindly hand enclosed note to dear "Jimmy" Oneal. How truly loyal and devoted you fine boys are to me, and how dearly I love you!

Always yours to the limit
E. V. D.

P.S. Your beautiful and appreciative letter of the 16th with Ryan Walker's villainous and characteristic display is in my hands, and in one breath I am thanking and loving you in all tenderness of devotion,

and in the next I {am} snorting with revenge and thirsting for the red corpuscles of that unrepentant miscreant whose welter-weight hide would not bring thirty German marks at open sale. To you privately, Davy, I may confide that the scenery the scribbling scamp added to your letter, while ruinous to its beauty, had at least the grace to make me laugh like the devil at a frolic, but of course I would not have that impish libeller enjoy the satisfaction of a burst of sardonic laughter for having made me roar at my own funeral.

Please have your charge D' affairs notify that Walker man, whose curly cranium is inflated with the delirium that I am seeking to placate his [one word illegible] ire, that he is *persona non grata* here and that he can have no direct communication with the Count of Elmhurst. Alas! How have the mighty fallen! But yesterday, as Primed Minister and Diplobloonist his word might have stood on its hind legs against the world—Today not one so poor, save his own sad associates, as to do him reverences. Avaunt! Get thee behind me, Satan, thy name is Ryanie, alias Anathema, and the blood of my fair reputation on thy guilty-Titian dome cries to Patagonia and echoes back from Senegambia.

Now just one lucid moment before the curtain falls. Your letter is beautiful—each word shines with your great soul's radiance. A thousand thanks to you and Ervin for giving me first page! If only it were better deserved. Tell Ervin his letter is better than a thousand gold mines. He *forbids* me, heavily underscored—to answer. Rare and understanding genius! Tell him I rejoice in the enemies he has made and that I love him as a brother, and you too, David, and "Jimmy" and—yes, Ryanie, too, the scamp!

Yours
Gene

Please send a marked copy of issue containing Chaplin article to I.W.W. headquarters, 1001 W. Madison St. Chicago

ALS, NN Kars.

1. Debs's article "Wake Up and Build," a plea for support of the *Call*, appeared in the September 16, 1922, issue of the paper.

2. Edith Chaplin was the wife of Ralph H. Chaplin (1888-1961), a writer and poet who was imprisoned at Leavenworth from 1918 to 1923 for violation of the Espionage Act. Chaplin joined the IWW in 1913, edited the IWW's *Solidarity*, and wrote the words to the popular IWW and labor song "Solidarity Forever." His home in Lombard, Illinois, was near the Elmhurst sanitarium. In "Fifty Two American Heroes" (*Call*, September 7, 1922), Debs praised the courage and demanded the release of Chaplin and the other IWW prisoners at Leavenworth, and in "Ralph Chaplin 'Disciplined' " (*Call*, September 18, 1922), he denounced the warden at Leavenworth who had assigned Chaplin to laundry duty at the prison and had withdrawn his writing priv-

ileges. Chaplin was released by President Harding in 1923 and pardoned by President Roosevelt in 1933. *New York Times,* March 28, 1961.

3. Carl Haessler (1888-1972) was a Rhodes Scholar who earned a doctorate in English at the University of Illinois in 1917 and was an instructor there for a short time before his dismissal from the faculty for declaring on his draft questionnaire that if he were drafted he would not serve. Drafted, nevertheless, in 1917, he was court-martialed and sentenced to twelve years in prison but was released in August 1920 after serving two years. *Miami Valley Socialist,* August 20, 1920. He returned to the *Milwaukee Leader* following his release and became managing editor of the Federated Press, which supplied news and other materials to the labor and socialist press and to other publications. In its August 1922 issue, *Labor Age* reported that the Federated Press was serving "more than 100" newspapers and magazines. In "Debs Ready to Re-Enter Fight" (*Miami Valley Socialist,* October 13, 1922), Haessler described his visit with Debs at Lindlahr Sanitarium.

4. Probably Edward J. Costello, who preceded Haessler as managing editor of the Federated Press. Costello had attracted national attention in October 1920 following his arrest in and deportation from England for "alleged affiliations with the Soviet Government of Russia." The Chicago offices of the Federated Press were raided by the Department of Justice at the same time. *New York Times,* October 22 and 24, 1922.

EVD to Edith Chaplin

September 27, 1922
Elmhurst, Illinois

My dear Comrade Chaplin,

My heart is very deeply touched by the news in regard to Ralph. I wonder with you how even a prison warden can be such a monster. But do not take it seriously as you do, dear comrade, for I feel there must be relief soon. We will make it so hot for that brute of a warden he will not long keep Ralph in solitary. I have written of the matter in other articles that will soon appear, and we shall soon have a flood of publicity upon the outrage. I only wish I were well and on the platform. But you may be sure I'll do all I can with my pen.

It makes every drop in me boil with resentment.

Did you see my article in the N.Y. Call and other papers entitled "Fifty-Two American Heroes," having reference to Ralph and the rest of the comrades at Leavenworth? If not, please let me know and I'll have it sent to you. I could have told you that the brutes at the prison would not allow the little pictures that would have given him such comfort to reach him. Oh, the heartless beasts!

How I rejoice to hear of the English edition of Ralph's poems with Galsworthy writing the introduction![1] That is certainly a triumph with a significance that counts for very much in the way of compensation.

Please accept my loving congratulations for yourself and Ralph and Ivan. Keep up your wonderful courage yet awhile, for I am sure Ralph will be with you for the holidays. Enclosed please find a little check for Ivan. Yes, the little pictures taken at your home are splendid.[2] With affection and loyal devotion to you and Ivan,

Yours always
E. V. Debs

Please let me know if there is anyway in which I can serve you.

ALS, MiU, Labadie Collection.

1. A collection of Ralph Chaplin's prison poems, *Bars and Shadows,* was published in New York and London in 1922. The plan to have John Galsworthy (1867-1933), the noted English dramatist, poet, and novelist, write an introduction to the English edition failed to materialize; Scott Nearing wrote the introduction for both the New York and London editions, the latter published by G. Allen and Unwin.

2. A photograph of Debs holding an unidentified baby illustrated Carl Haessler's account of the meeting at Chaplin's home in Lombard. *Miami Valley Socialist,* October 13, 1922.

EVD to David Karsner

October 8, [1922]
Elmhurst, Illinois

My dear David,

Thank you for your very appreciative note just received and for your kind and flattering treatment of my statement.[1] That you approve of my position and the way I have stated it is to me a matter of special satisfaction. The exception you take to one of the paragraphs is due to the fact that the change from the economic A.R.U. to the political Social democracy (now the Socialist party) was a matter of grim necessity, forced by the railroad corporations which waged relentless war upon the union and made its further existence as a labor union impossible, and to the further fact that for reasons I deemed sufficient I did not wish in that particular document to criticize or state my objection to any other party. With the thought I had in mind there is no contradiction in the statement, but of course it is open, as most any statement is, to a different interpretation. You will know, I am sure, that I appreciate fully the spirit in which you almost invariably commend and rarely except, and I am very glad you had the clever idea to feature the salient "Fourteen Points."[2]

I am wondering why Ervin never used the article I sent appealing

for financial help for the Call.[3] I hoped it might be of use and I am sorry that, evidently, it missed its aim and could not be made to serve.

Love to you all and always

Yours in and for the cause
E. V. D.

George Eckert[4] my sheriff at Woodstock '27 years ago is coming to see me today with his daughter. I shall be glad to see them for they are certainly my friends.

ALS, NN Kars.

1. In "A Review and Personal Statement" (*Call*, October 8, 1922), Debs traced the evolution of the Socialist party from the American Railway Union and the Social Democracy of America through the impact of World War I and the postwar splintering of the party and announced that "I have arrived at the definite conclusion that my place in the future as in the past is in the Socialist Party." He added that "I know many of the members of the Worker's Party . . . and I know that in taking the position they have they were actuated by the best of motives."

2. In a box accompanying Debs's "Review and Personal Statement," Karsner listed "The Fourteen Points of Eugene V. Debs," which summarized the points made in Debs's article.

3. As noted, Debs's "Wake Up and Build" appeared in the September 16, 1922, issue of the *Call*. His statement "The N. Y. Call Is the Watchdog of Liberty" was printed above a subscription form for the paper on October 1, 1922.

4. In "A Sheriff I Loved" (*St. Louis Labor*, February 17, 1923), Debs described the kindness shown him by George Eckert (1841-1923), sheriff at the Woodstock, Illinois, jail where Debs served a six-month sentence in 1895. The article was widely reprinted.

EVD to David Karsner

October 11, [1922]
[Elmhurst, Illinois]

My dear David,

Have you received one of these jokers[1] from the *Jawgia* goblins? You will see by the one enclosed just at hand that the Ku Klux Kayotes and Krackers down in Lynchland have stopped barbecuing "Niggahs" long enough to discover that the foundations of the government are being dug up by the roots.[2] Gread Gawd! Who could have konjured up such a Kalamity, and why, oh, why are we kursed with such a kruel katastrophe! Let us rejoice that the knights of the White mule and illiteracy have boldly seized the tumbrel and sounded forth the alarm, and that the Kleagles and Kligrapps and Klans and other Klams are now sallying forth with their trusty lynching lariats in hand to Amer-

icanize the Bolsheviki and save our Kristian civilization from being Bolshevized.

Sic Semper Moonshiner Lynchem and Roastem!

Beware!

[drawing of skull and crossbones]

Pull ye radicals, pull for the shore The white Mule has brayed and he will bray no more!

AL, NN Kars.

1. Debs enclosed a copy of the September 30, 1922, issue of the *Searchlight*, a Klan paper published in Atlanta, Georgia.

2. The *Searchlight* headline declared "Klan Declares War On Radical Forces In U.S."

EVD to Theodore Dreiser

October 14, 1922
Elmhurst, Illinois

My dear Mr. Dreiser,

Please allow me to add my name to the petition being addressed to you by the Paul Dresser Memorial Association[1] to grant your consent to the removal of the remains[2] of your famous brother to Terre Haute as the fitting place for their final repose. The people of Terre Haute he loved and who loved him would feel highly honored to have the "Banks of the Wabash" he immortalized chosen for his last resting place.

I hear from you or rather of you, aside from your splendid literary works, through our mutual friend David Karsner with whom you are an immense favorite, and I hope that some good day it may be my privilege to take you by the hand.

Believe me with all cordial regards and best wishes

Your friend and admirer
Eugene V. Debs

ALS, PU, Dreiser Papers.

1. As noted, both Dreiser and his brother, Paul Dresser, were born in Terre Haute. The memorial association, organized in Terre Haute, sought to establish a Dresser memorial in that city.

2. Dresser was buried in Chicago.

EVD to David Karsner

October 14, [1922]
Elmhurst, Illinois

My dear David,

I am glad to hear you had such a fine letter from Sinclair Lewis. He's a mighty fine scout and you and he will love each other at sight. He's clean-cut, big and genuine and on the program for a good deal bigger things than the big things he's already set going. I had thought the article I wrote for the Call missed fire and am glad to know it will be of some service in your drive. Note that the matter of the publication of your "Talks in T.H." including book is before *Call* board and hope the action will be favorable. I believe after all it would be best to have it issued by the *Call*. As to the visit of George Eckert my sheriff of 27 yrs. ago, he and his daughter Georgie who have been my fast friends through all the years, spent Sunday afternoon with me, were my guests for supper and during early evening hours. They drove 50 miles in their car from Woodstock here and we had a most delightful time going over the jail days again. He was all through the civil war and is near 81 but sprightly as a boy. I never had warmer friends than Mr. Eckert and his wife and daughter, and my wife and I have received holiday and other reminders from them regularly ever since. Mrs. Eckert, dear soul, is dead. She wept as if her heart would break the last time I saw her—over 20 years ago—when I bade her good-bye after a brief visit between trains. I had not seen any of them since. When I first landed at Woodstock some of the farmers who thought me a monster (some of them had threatened lynching on my arrival) called on him to have him "treat me rough," but he told them I was his prisoner and I should not be treated worse than any other. Within 24 hours after I got there we were fast friends & boon companions & have been ever since. He & his daughter are as fine as they can be. Soon after I left his daughter who was President of the Relief Corps, Auxiliary to the Local Post G.A.R., arranged a meeting for me at City Hall & it proved a notable occasion—Bertha Hale White has just been here & will write about the Eckert visit better than I can. Pardon haste, David, I've got a busy day before me.

With love [illegible words]

AL, NN Kars.

EVD to Grace Keller

October 14, 1922
Elmhurst, Illinois

My dear "Gracie,"

A thousand times I've thought of you, as you must know, and I've followed you out yonder with the prayer in my heart that you {would} find, if not the Eldorado of your dreams, at least a spot to suit your simple taste and supply your modest wants, beneath a blue sky and in a friendly atmosphere and a hospitable environment. For a time I do not doubt you will be busy getting settled and have problems enough to engage you until you have the new home established and the house in order. Mabel's kindness has kept me in close touch with you and Spurgeon and Helen and Thomas,[1] and all of you precious souls with whom I feel myself bound up by the ties that never sever, sharing with you, dear Gracie, in loving and sympathetic spirit, all that fate or fortune has brought to your lot. Mabel regretted so deeply to see you moving further away and so did I, but after all the miles do not separate us and perhaps we may see each other out yonder at least as often (or as rarely) as before. No matter where you may be shifted or we may be marooned, you can never in all eternity move or rather be moved out of our hearts.

Mabel, dear soul, is grieving sorely with almost breaking heart over poor, afflicted and dearly-beloved Father. What a tragedy for them both, and why must the closing years be so painful and joyless and then end so dreary and pathetic! Mabel's tender heart that aches for every mortal's pain and suffering, is wrung in pitiless torment day and night as if some cruel and relentless fate had marked for deepest chastening, as with the Master, the sweetest soul in all the world.

Let us hope there is light ahead and better days beyond the afflictions of the hour, and let us cling to the faith that we are to share some (and I pray many) of these beautiful days together.

Be assured, dear Gracie, that my heart is full of all you have been to me and that my love for you will abide to the last of my days. Please give my dearest love to dear Spurgeon and to Helen and Thomas and all of your blessed little colony, and with the warmest wishes my heart knows, I am always

Faithfully your friend and comrade,
E. V. Debs

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Following their marriage in 1922, Grace Keller and Spurgeon Odell moved to

a farm near Sacramento, California, where they hoped to raise chickens for a living. They were joined there by Thomas and Helen Thomsen, Minneapolis friends who had been active in the Socialist party and Birth Control League there. Helen Thomsen served as secretary of the Minneapolis chapter of the league, Keller as state secretary. The chicken-farm project was "a dismal failure." Jean Keller Bouvier to editor, May 2, 1984; *Birth Control Review,* February 1917.

Theodore Dreiser to EVD

October 17, 1922
New York City

Dear Eugene Debs:

First let me say that I am one of the many who voted for Debs—on occasion & who was gloomy because of the powers that could prosecute & lock him up. I admired your stand & I do now and I hope all good things for you. More I could not say to any man.

As to the matter of the ashes or bones of my late good brother. I am now placed in an odd position. The logical place for a monument is Terre Haute—and on the banks of the Wabash there. Paul liked Terre Haute. He liked to go back there. In the first days of your fame he knew of you & spoke of you to me. Several years ago a man by the name of Charles T. Jewett,[1] of 492 W. Center St. wrote me & wanted me to obtain {the} permission of the various members of the family for the transfer of the body there—in case a place & monument for it could be arranged. I consulted all those living & advised him that there was no objection. Then I heard nothing except this—that it was probable that the body would be removed to Indianapolis. I undertook some publicity for the idea—outside the state but this seemed to meet with little favor from those in Terre Haute, so I dropped that. Not a word since.

Recently came a letter from the Indiana Society of Chicago,[2] saying that it wanted to place a monument over the grave in Chicago. (St. Boniface R.C. Cemetary—North Side) It wanted the family consent. I explained about the Terre Haute idea & stated that there had been no objection there & would be none but that it might be best to see if the Terre Haute idea had fallen through. At the same time that your letter reached me yesterday (here) came one from Edward. W. Halloway, Secy of the Chicago Indiana Society. He states that now the Indiana Society desires to co-operate with D. N. Foster,[3] President of the Soldiers Home at Lafayette. That Governor McCray[4] favors having the monument & body there—or, so I gather. That places me

in an odd position. Personally I favored & do now, Terre Haute, as do the other members of his family. But if a quarrel is to develop which will mean no monument for a long time, I would rather see the Lafayette project go through. Actually, in the crisis I would like your sincere advice. I do not know Indiana very well & you do. What do you suggest. I am writing Mr. Halloway about your letter & state that personally I favor Terre Haute—as would Paul. He was born there & always liked it. But also I hope that no delaying quarrel arises. Perhaps you have influence with Gov. McCray—or the Chicago Indiana Society. Why not write them direct? As to the consent of the family—I can get the written consent of those living I am sure. My compliments, my thanks & my sincere good wishes for yourself & your happiness.

Theodore Dreiser.

ALS, Eugene V. Debs Foundation, Debs Home.

1. Charles T. Jewett was city editor of the *Terre Haute Star.*
2. A social-fraternal organization of prominent Hoosiers living or working in Chicago. The society sought, among other things, to promote and publicize Indiana's literary traditions and its authors.
3. David Nathaniel Foster (1841-1934) was a wealthy Fort Wayne, Indiana, businessman who served as president of the board of trustees of the Indiana Soldiers Home at Lafayette from 1921 to 1925. Called Colonel throughout his career, Foster was a Civil War veteran and leader of the Grand Army of the Republic in Indiana.
4. Warren T. McCray (1865-1938) was governor of Indiana from 1921 to 1924. Following Debs's release from prison, McCray described Debs, in a speech before the American Legion in Indianapolis in January 1922, as "the arch traitor of our country" and suggested that "the Legion teach him a lesson." In "Debs Calls the Jury" (*New Day,* May 20, 1922), Debs denounced McCray as "a shallow politician" and his speech as "the bombast of a posing nut." McCray resigned as governor of Indiana in April 1924, having been convicted of mail fraud, fined $10,000, and sentenced to serve ten years, ironically, in the federal prison at Atlanta. He served three years of the term.

EVD to Theodore Dreiser

October 20, 1922
Elmhurst, Illinois

My dear Theodore Dreiser,

Your good letter of the 17th inst was a most gratifying surprise to me and was read with full appreciation. I did not know that you or your brother had such a kindly interest in me or in fact any interest whatever, and I had often regretted that although we were born on

the same spot we drifted out into the big world and far apart without ever once coming into personal contact. It was therefore with real delight that {I learned} you and your brother both entertained for me the same friendly feeling and held me in the same high regard I did you.

I have very carefully read your letter and can appreciate your feeling in the quandary in which you find yourself in regard to the final disposition of your distinguished brother's bodily remains. It is another case of "Homer dead" and a high and well-deserved compliment to your brother to be now the object of such rivalry in the claim for his monumental dust, but I can understand perfectly your own delicacy and embarrassment in being called upon to become a partisan in the controversy.

You have been good enough to suggest that I write to Governor McCray and express my views in the matter and I should like nothing better than to comply with your wish but for the circumstance that not long ago the Governor made a speech before the American Legion in which he said, calling me by name, that he profoundly regretted that the state of Indiana was disgraced by being the home of the one arch-traitor in America. Of course this does not disturb me, but you will realize that the Governor is not interested in my views in this or any other matter.[1]

You have also been partial enough, and I feel deeply touched by the confidence it implies, to ask my advice in your situation and I shall give it with the perfect frankness you have a right to expect from me and with due regard to the conflicting claims with which you are confronted. It seems to me, beyond any question of doubt, that Terre Haute, the city of his birth and boyhood, the place he loved and to which he fondly returned as often as he had the occasion, and among the people "On the Banks of the Wabash" he loved and who loved him—it seems to me, dear friend, that that is pre-eminently the logical and fitting final resting place for {your brother's} remains,[2] and I feel equally confident that the future will vindicate your judgment should you decide in favor of his native city which so ardently and lovingly claims the high privilege of doing him and his family that honor.

If there is any way in which I can possibly serve you in the matter I am at your command with pleasure in any way in my power.

Thanking you sincerely for your kind and generous consideration and with all cordial greetings and best wishes I am

Faithfully your friend
Eugene V. Debs

ALS, PU, Dreiser Papers.

1. In "Gene Debs and the Governor" (*New York Call*, February 5, 1922), Debs noted that the American Civil Liberties Union had recently published a list of "50 cases of flagrant, open, undenied acts of violence, by legionaires" and described McCray's speech as "casting a firebrand into a mob magazine." In a letter from McCray to Debs, dated January 17, 1922 (*Miami Valley Socialist*, February 3, 1922), McCray said that he "did not speak from notes" and was "not sure of the language quoted in the papers" but that "in the main it was what I said."

2. Dresser's remains were never moved from Chicago. More than forty years later (1966), the restored Dresser Home was opened on Dresser Drivé in Terre Haute.

EVD to Mabel Dunlap Curry

November 5, [1922]
[Elmhurst, Illinois]

My dearest,

I have wept over your loving birthday remembrance, your gift of sweets made with your own dear hands and the messages, the blessed little messages that contained the love, the word my heart has been hungering for and I have been almost dying for these days and weeks that have seemed like all eternity. With all your care, all your peal of agony and insufferable suspence and torture of the great, tender Mother-heart over your dear Father[1] and your sweet Harriet and Wrisley, to say nothing of your own illness, weariness and heartache, you still found time, you still had the strength and the patience and unceaseless devotion that only an infinitely great love could inspire to remember me in the most tender, touching way you have on my birthday. From the very depths of my heart I thank you, my blessed love. Every chord within me is vibrant with emotion and my eyes are filled with tears of gratitude. You are an Angel, Mabel, and on my lips there trembles a prayer to the God I love and worship to bless and keep you forever!

I sobbed with deep pain as I read these letters, these tenderest of tributes mingled with {the} heart-cries of your sweet children.[2] Dear Harriet's life is still where it was when you carried it beneath your heart. You have saved her life—and not her's alone. You know how I love and adore her and why. With all my heart

Yours
Gene

And to think of all that weighed upon your tender heart at the time, of the tears so impatient to fill your eyes and wet your cheeks, and of all else to weary and sadden and distract you and yet you could

do this sweet, gracious, loving kindness that bears the stamp of your soul's divinity, and that touches me to silence and tears of reverence and gratitude.

Your birthday letter, "special" delivery, came into my hands early in the morning with its loving message which set my heart aglow and made the flowers spring up in beauty all about me. Thank you, dearest, for each sweet and tender word and believe me, your love and blessing are reciprocated with all my heart. Your dear Father has gone and the loving care you bestowed upon him has turned to loneliness, but it is comforting at least to know that he left you so much improved. I am sure that the treatment, if followed up, will result in still greater improvement, if not in complete cure.

Yes, it was sweet in Gertrude to hold your hand and ask to "help you" as you sat at her friends for she knew what was in your heart. Marguerite who was here the other day also knows, dear child. I wanted to give her a special message for you but there were several others here and she had to leave before her visit was fairly begun.

There was a reference in M.P.'s[3] letter to something in your's that brought back "saturation" to me with a flood of sweet-sad memories. It is only in connection with J.J. that familiar matter has a sacredness to me and an unuttered appeal no words can ever describe.

I did not wish anyone here to know it was my birthday. But when I went down to breakfast a dainty [one word illegible] parcel was beside my plate with a very sweet message. It was a lovely embroidered handkerchief with my initials in it from a little Southern woman here, a patient who was a nurse in the Army, is ill and sad and homesick; and I've been trying to comfort [her] a bit. She's a dear little soul—I don't know how she found out it was my birthday. In the evening a committee came, Dr. De Young[4] & Dr. Whitaker,[5] two comrades, brought me the great Cake baked for me by the Baker's Union. Could you but see this Chef D'Oeuvre! It surpasses all imagining. It is as big as a bushel and the beauty of the decoration is beyond description. It was made by the most expert cake bakers and has my name with greetings, flowers, jewels etc. Never in all my life have I seen such a cake and it is the marvel of the whole community. Today they are coming out with Bertha Hale White and a photographer to take a picture of the cake and write up the story for the Socialist press.

Dr. Whitaker brought me a quart of rare old home made wine and I'm going to save it till you come and then we'll have a birthday drink together. Dr. Whitaker, generous soul, also presented me with a birthday check for $67.00 one for each year—I'm wondering if Harriet is at Lombard[6] as I wish to run over to see her on Friday.

You'll be up next week will you not? I'll meet you at the R. Will write you more definitely later.

My love, dearest, and my blessing always

Yours
Gene

I shall write you later. I can not now. My heart is too full. It is evening—the shadows are falling on my melancholy as I take this poor little waif of a soul in sorrow to the village post office.

ALS, InU, Lilly Library, Curry Papers.

1. Joseph McCune Dunlap, Mabel Curry's father.
2. Mabel Curry had three daughters: Margaret McCune, Harriet Sloan, and Charlotte Jane.
3. Marguerite Prevey.
4. In *Man Unafraid*, McAlister Coleman's 1930 biography of Debs, Mouritz De Young was identified as a New York City socialist who "guided" Debs on his trips to New York and "saw to it that Gene's privacy was not invaded." De Young had moved to Chicago after World War I. He was "not a Doctor," Coleman wrote, but Debs called him Doctor, just as he called "a decidedly unmartial teacher 'Colonel' " or "an Indiana coal miner 'Professor.' "
5. This is a misspelling of the name of John T. Whitlock (not a doctor), who was the owner of the Cherokee Remedy Co. in Chicago, which manufactured "Whitlock's Specific Remedy, the Red Man's Way to Health." He served as financial chairman for the Socialist party for a number of years and was the party's candidate for United States senator in 1926.
6. Wrisley Oleson's home was in Lombard, Illinois.

EVD to Theodore Debs

November 7, 1922
Chicago, Illinois

My sweet old Pard,

Several times I have warmed my heart and refreshed my spirit reading your beautiful birthday letter and incidentally regaling myself with dear Gertrude's most delicious little cakes, the extra flavor of which I am sure you know I appreciate more than words can tell. And the big and beautiful hickory nuts, rugged symbols of the holy days of our youth, are a joy to me forever. You made a splendid reply to the enclosed letter from Snyder. If any further inquiry is made as to my leaving prison before all were out you may say that I *did* say I wished to be the last released and I sent word to that effect direct to President Harding by Lincoln Steffens[1] but when my commutation

was issued the Warden was ordered to release me. I had to leave the prison. I had nothing to say about that. But it would do that miserable wretch who makes the whine no good to explain for he simply wants an excuse to cover his own poltroonery, and if it were not that he would invent something else. Such low creatures are not worth wasting time on—they are the barnacles on the labor movement—I note what you say about the Oklahoma business[2] and it's almost unbelievable. Well, we had no hand in that and they will have to work out of that miserable situation the best they can and in good time they'll come out all the wiser and stronger.

Please tell dear Gertrude how much I'm enjoying her delicious little cakes and how sweet it was in her to remember me in her loving way, knowing she has been cleaning house and not too well herself. I fervently hope she is steadily improving under the treatment and that she will in time be perfectly restored, as I am very confident she will be.

I have passed a cake or two of Gertrude's to just two or three of my dearest friends here and you may be sure they are fully appreciated.

I am still happy over sweet Marguerite's lovely visit and you can hardly know how very proud I was and am of that most precious child. The Union Bakers of Chicago made me the most beautiful and wonderful birthday cake I ever saw. It was made by experts and was beautiful beyond description—a real masterpiece of art. It just filled a bushel basket and had my name, age, greetings etc inscribed in most artistic lettering, surrounded by pictures and decorations of surpassing grace and beauty.

I thought of you and Gertrude and Marguerite and wished you might have been here to see and share it. I had it served to the guests last night and the Doctor very kindly laid a type-written note with each slice saying it was a Birthday Cake from the Chicago bakers etc. When I entered the Dining Room they all applauded and then surrounded me and tendered congratulations. It was a delightful little occasion.

The cake was brought by Comrades De Young of N.Y. (now at Chicago) whom you remember and Dr. Whitlock our Indian medicine man. The latter presented me with a check for $67.—one dollar for each year, a truly noble and generous gift from a devoted and great-hearted comrade.

Lumbago has been prodding me the last days but I know I'm on the way to getting rid of the infernal torment and joy-destroyer. My

heart's dearest love and many kisses to you and Gertrude and Marguerite.

Always your loyal old pard
Gene

I suppose you have seen November issue of Debs Magazine. How do you like my article on "Force and Violence"?[3] I sent a marked copy to Daugherty in sealed envelope.

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. In his *Autobiography,* Lincoln Steffens described his visit to Debs at Atlanta and his efforts to persuade Harding to release Debs and the other political prisoners, but he did not mention Debs's desire "to be the last to be released."

2. In February 1922, many of the leading socialists in Oklahoma joined with farmers, small shopkeepers, and workers to form the Farmer-Labor Reconstruction League, which won the state's Democratic party primary and elected "Our Jack" Walton governor. In response to the "defection" of the Oklahoma socialists, "the charter of the Oklahoma state organization was revoked and the state [party] placed under the jurisdiction of the National Office." *Socialist World,* March 1922.

3. In "Force and Violence" (*Debs Magazine,* November 1922), Debs denounced "the Department of Injustice and their petty accessories in office for still keeping the political prisoners in their rotten prison holes."

EVD to Mabel Dunlap Curry

[November 8, 1922]
[Chicago, Illinois]

My beloved J.J.

No word from you since you reported intended visit to Indpls, and I'm wondering if a possible telegram from Harriet advising change of place did not change your arrangements. But I'm assuming you left for Indpls. on Tuesday as intended and if so please let me know if before leaving you received my letter of Monday 6th.[1] It was of personal interest, concerning matters you made inquiry about, and I wish to be sure it reached you, and if not, kindly let me know if you found it awaiting you on your return. So thoughtful of you to send your birthday "special" so it would come to me in the morning as a sunrise in my heart. And the dear box of sweets, made with your own loving hands and the touch of tenderness and devotion clinging to them still, and making each of them a precious reminder of your heart! If in your lifetime you are the recipient of but a small share of the blessings you so freely bestow upon others, boundless happiness will be yours through all your allotted days, and they are to be many,

for I am to have your picture on your Eightieth Birthday and attend with you the golden anniversary of the B.D. conference.

I can well understand how reluctantly Father and George took their departure from the House of Hope and the Home of Happiness. The sweet, radiant soul of that love-lit abode made for them a new heaven and a new earth wherein they would fain linger all the days of their lives. Yes, dearest Juno, some good day you will take me to your Father and we shall have the long deferred hour of joy together.

Yes, the letter you mailed on the 3d came unsealed but otherwise intact and in perfect order. It had not been taken out or tampered with, I am sure. Three letters went to you at Indpls and a small package. Pls. see that you get them all. If they do not hand you the little pckge. with your letters please ask for it as it is kept separately and the wrapper or the strings or any part of the package that contained your birthday sweets and they are all before me and too precious and sacred for the touch of a vandal hand. The message inside touched my tears at once and it now lies before me and seems to speak to me as if your very lips were in its loving lines. How marvellous your touch, my dear, that makes the tiniest scrap of paper glow with your radiant spirit! And the little blue-eyed J.J's within, clinging tenderly to each precious tablet to give sweet tongue to each sweet message, dimpled and smiling—you did not know, did you, how many fairies there were in that festive little group, nestling close to each heartbeat for the intended surprise? Well, there are thirty-one of them and I dare not tell you how often they have been fondled and coaxed to give up the innermost heart of their message. Several of them confided to me in a very confidential way. One of them assured positively that J.J's heart belongs to Junkinton and Mrs. Wilson for all time, and another whispered that never before had Juno sent [illegible words] clad in the shining raiment of an angel from Juno's throne of Beauty. M.P.'s reference to a certain mention in your letter brought back to me vividly the theme of "Saturation" and I recall it was at Indpls. you had the expression the recital of which went to my very soul and has held me in thrall ever since, a fact of divine significance in association with the "Dream of Beauty." Why did this so take hold of my innermost being and thrill and move me with its subtle and mysterious power? I have my reason and must leave you to surmise it. I am wondering if anyone else to whom this divine commingling of pain and ecstacy might have been presented as it was to me could have been so deeply and tenderly moved and mystified by it as I was! There is one phase of Junkinton's case beyond electronics and all other treatment save only Dr. J.J's method of treatment, including

the hot bath and massage and other accessories with specific healing virtue.

I love you, dearest, more and more as you grow more and more beautiful day by day and year by year. How infinitely precious and wonderful you [words missing]

AL, InU, Lilly Library, Curry Papers.

1. In Debs's letter to Curry on November 6, 1922, he thanked her for "those precious little heart-throb messages around each of the taffy-kisses," which gave him "a succession of electric thrills."

Theodore Debs to David Karsner

November 27, 1922
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear David:

Things have all been out of kilter lately and as a consequence matters of all kinds have been subject to great neglect. This will account for my apparent neglect of your letters of the 14th. and 21st. inst. For a few days I was out of town and I had no sooner returned that I encountered Mr. Neuralgia who registers about this time for the winter and early spring seasons. But I am coming along now in pretty good shape and if I do not get an unexpected shot will be back to "normalcy" shortly.

I note what you say about the Call articles[1] and I would be glad if I could tell you that I thoroughly approved the articles and could give them an unqualified commendation but unfortunately I cannot do so as there are certain features in the articles which I am sure would better have been omitted and some others that are questionable as to their accuracy. I am sure you wrote with the most loyal and devoted feeling for Gene and with the purest and most laudable and unselfish intention and that on the whole you did your work well and most of it is fine and altogether admirable, but as you wrote from memory you could hardly be expected to avoid errors and misquotations, but my chief objection is that you put in matter of a strictly private nature, including family matters which did not concern the public and should never have been published. The conversation you had with my sister in New York[2] was of a strictly personal nature and knowing you to be an intimate friend of ours Emily opened her heart to you freely in talking over family matters with you but did not

dream she was talking to you for publication and it was not fair to her nor our family to publish the results of that purely personal visit and conversation and the intimacies of a confidential nature that were disclosed to you in the privacy of her home. I am sorry indeed that you did not submit the articles to Gene for approval before they were put into print for if they had been I am sure certain features would surely have been changed and others entirely eliminated.

Poor Sweeney![3] he is such a likable and lovable chap and I was certainly distressed to hear of his misfortune. We had a letter from him some time ago in which he stated that he had two fractured ribs "not very nobly acquired." There were no details. None were needed. No doubt, Sweeney in his cups said something to which a brute incapable of understanding or appreciating this fine soul took offense and almost murdered him. I hope he has recovered and that the affair did not also cost him his job with the World, which would bring more suffering to the little wife and the regiment of little Sweenies.

No, Nora Ragsdale[4] is no longer on a Terre Haute paper. The Star (God save the mark) could not stand her radicalism and let her out and for the same reason she cannot get on either of the other two papers.

I'm agreed with the "damned fool" that told Ervin your column[5] was "good stuff." I read it with unusual interest as I think it one of the real features of the paper.

See by the morning press dispatches that Longuet[6] had a great meeting {at} Chicago yesterday and that thousands were turned away. If such a gathering could be organized and its enthusiasm coined into real constructive effort the day of emancipation for the workers would be here.

We wish, Old Scout, that we might be looking at you with that big pipe and listening to your musical voice—and we will again some day, and in the meantime Gertrude and Marguerite and all of us here send you our love.

As ever yours,
Theodore Debs

TLS, NN Kars.

1. Karsner's *Talks With Debs* was being run as a serial in the *Call* at the time. The first installment appeared on October 31, 1922.

2. In preparing *Talks With Debs*, Karsner spent an evening interviewing Debs's sister, Emily Mailloux, at her home in New York. In the course of the interview Mrs. Mailloux discussed Debs's education, his early career, and his family background and challenged the idea that Debs's "mother and father were poverty-stricken" and that he was "born and raised in the working-class" (p. 71).

3. Probably Charles P. Sweeney (1892-1924) a reporter for the *New York World*

who visited Debs at Atlanta and wrote "Debs Pictured as Dominant Figure in Atlanta Prison" (*Call*, December 2, 1921). Sweeney worked for the Committee for Public Information during World War I and wrote a series of widely read articles on the Klan for the *World*. *New York Times*, December 12, 1924.

4. Nora B. Ragsdale worked as a reporter for both the *Terre Haute Tribune* and the *Star* between 1916 and 1922. She interviewed Debs in 1918 and published "Debs Rejects Kaiser Brand Socialists" in the *Tribune* on March 2, 1918.

5. Karsner's "Here There and Everywhere" column in the *Call*.

6. The French socialist leader spoke in Chicago on November 26, 1922. In his first public appearance since his release from prison, Debs "greeted" Longuet at the Ashland Auditorium rally, which attracted "more than 5,000 cheering persons." *New York Times*, November 27, 1922. Both Debs and Longuet spoke at the afternoon rally and at a banquet at Douglas Park Auditorium that evening. *Debs Magazine*, December 1922.

Carl Sandburg to EVD

November 28, 1922
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Gene:

You will always be close to us. The only way we can decently remember you and what you left with us here will be a certain way of living it, maybe dying it.

And some day I hope to get the strong truth of those hands of yours into into [*sic*] a poem. It's only a hope but I'll try for it and learn something.

My signature goes for the whole bunch under our roof. As you went away out the front gate one of them said, "He's a big rough flower."

With you it isn't really a good-by because you are still here.

Carl Sandburg

TLS, EVD Foundation, Debs Home.

EVD to David Karsner

December 8, 1922
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear David:

It was my intention to write you more promptly upon my return home but I have been so besieged and there have been so many

matters long delayed awaiting attention that I have been unable to do so. Your kind letters of the 21st. ult. to me and of the 29th. ult. to Theodore are in my hand after being noted with the usual care and interest. I am now going to write you in answer to both and in so doing I must confess at the beginning that what I shall have to say will pain me more than it will surprise you. I must be entirely frank with you. I cannot approve your last book about "The Talks in Terre Haute." There is much in it that would not be there if I {had} seen the proofs. I am sorry I did not know and had no intimation that you were going to publish all that passed between us in most intimate and private conversation.

Now let me assure you, dear David, if the question should occur to your mind, that I do not and cannot for a moment question your motive. I know that what you wrote was inspired by the same fine loyalty and devotion you have always had for me. I know you did the work in the most generous and unselfish spirit, that your sole desire was to serve me personally and the cause in general, and it is in that same spirit that I write you now, although with the deepest reluctance and regret, that I think your judgment in some features of the work was at fault and that I cannot give, as I would so love to do, for your personal sake if for no other reason, my whole-hearted approval of the book.

There are some private and domestic matters which should never have been mentioned. You place my sister and myself in a strange and contradictory attitude, to put it mildly, that does not at all concern the public. When she opened her heart to you freely about intimate family affairs, knowing you to be our most trusted friend, she did not for a moment suspect that she was talking to you for publication and that what she said would be spread broadcast in a newspaper and put in book form {as} enduring literature.

In your chapter covering that feature you did not repeat to me a quarter of what you say you told me as having been told you by her. There are other matters of a purely personal and private nature that I would not have felt free to go into with you if I had known what use you intended to make of them.

You made no notes for you did not wish me to know of your project. I am quite sure you intended only to most agreeably surprise me. Your memory was often at fault and there are many inaccuracies and misstatements in what you have written. You enlarged upon the Crawford Fairbanks incident[1] and had me say things I did not say at all about a string of horses he never had and about his sending the horse and buggy to my house after {my} having refused it, placing me in an embarrassing situation here and making it necessary for me

to explain to him that you wrote from memory and had fallen into error in what you had written. I never told you he had a string of fast horses. That had reference to a different man and you got the story mixed which is not at all strange as you wrote entirely from memory about all these many conversations. Mr. Fairbanks did offer me the horse and buggy but the story you print in regard to it is entirely different from the one I gave you. The matter of Gompers' visit to Atlanta is entirely different from my statement to you and I suspect that in writing as you did you had Lucy Robins in mind and intended to rebuke and refute her through me.[2] You have me say things I would not have said and you gave impressions as to people, Frank Harris[3] for instance, to which I cannot assent. You have me publicly rebuke St. John Tucker[4] for taking advantage of personal conversations with me, a thing I would never have done anymore than I would in your case. You also made that bald statement that in the future no one will know whether articles going out over my name were mine or not.[5] I was not only surprised but shocked when I read that statement. It has been an extremely rare thing in my life that an article bearing my name has not been my own and this only in an extreme emergency to serve the cause under circumstances when I could not myself personally do the things, for physical or other sufficient reasons, that was imperatively demanded. You know under what circumstances I granted this privilege to you but only because I could not refuse the Call[6] and on condition that the matter should be submitted to me for approval before it appeared in print. Had this also been done in the case we are now discussing this letter so painful to me would not have to be written. I shall have to be even more extremely careful about the use of my name in the future than I have been in the past.

Theodore and I feel exactly the same about the book and we cannot comply with your request, deeply sorry as we are, to join you in extending its sale and giving it circulation. We gladly admit the many splendid features of the book, the great number of fine passages and the more than generous personal tributes which make it all the more regrettable that the work should be marred by inaccuracies, errors of statement, wrong impressions, and intimate private affairs not intended for publication.

It is rarely in my life that I have had occasion to write a letter that pains and distresses me as does this one to you. It is with no feeling but that of sorrow and regret that I make this expression of dissent and disapproval. I know how keenly you will be disappointed and all my sympathy will be with you. I would be happy indeed if I could but write you about your book in a way to make you happy.

Theodore and I join in all loving regards and good wishes and I am as ever in the past,

Yours faithfully,
Eugene V. Debs

TLS, NN Kars.

1. Crawford Fairbanks (1843-1924) was a wealthy Terre Haute businessman who owned the Terre Haute Distilling Co., the Terre Haute Brewing Co., the *Terre Haute Tribune*, the leading hotel in the city (the Terre Haute House) and was on the board of directors of a score of other banks, railroads, and trust companies. In *Talks With Debs* (pp. 128–29), Karsner described Fairbanks's various philanthropies in Terre Haute, including the city's public library, and said that on one occasion Fairbanks offered as a gift to Debs "a fine horse and carriage" that Debs had admired and that Debs "returned the gift with thanks."

2. In *Talks With Debs* (p. 59), Debs is quoted as saying that when Gompers finished his speech to the prisoners at Atlanta, "the convicts expressed what they felt in silence." Gompers "had nothing to tell them."

3. Debs was quoted in *Talks With Debs* (pp. 24-25) as calling Harris "one of the best writers of pure English in America" but having "no interest in a biography so brutally frank and cruel as Harris' biography of Oscar Wilde."

4. On page 45 of *Talks With Debs*, Tucker is criticized for publishing articles over Debs's name in *Debs Magazine* without Debs's authorization.

5. Karsner wrote (p. 45) that "innumerable articles and statements have been signed by [Debs] that he never saw or authorized, and for this reason . . . it would be difficult for any one to collect authentic writing by Debs."

6. Under the heading "Though Jailed He Speaks," Karsner had throughout the term of Debs's imprisonment printed in the *Call* excerpts from earlier Debs speeches and writings.

Otto Branstetter to EVD

December 9, 1922
[Chicago, Illinois]

EUGENE V. DEBS

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE IN SESSION HOTEL OLMSTED CONGRATULATE YOU UPON RECOVERY OF YOUR HEALTH CORDIALLY WELCOME YOUR RETURN TO ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN THE PARTY WORK STOP PRESENT MEETING OF GREAT IMPORTANCE AND WE URGENTLY REQUEST YOUR PRESENCE SUNDAY MORNING FOR CONSULTATION REGARDING LABOR PARTY CONFERENCE[1] AS WELL AS GENERAL PARTY MATTERS AND FUTURE PLANS

OTTO BRANSTETTER SECRETARY

Telegram, IN.

1. In February 1922, the Socialist party joined with a number of railroad unions, Farmer-Labor party and Non-Partisan League representatives, a number of labor-union leaders, and various other reform groups in forming the Conference for Progressive Political Action (CPPA), which adopted a progressive program and a resolution to support liberal candidates in future elections. At the CPPA conference in Cleveland on December 11 and 12, 1922, the Socialist party delegates sought but failed to win the approval of "a platform not inconsistent with that of the [Socialist] Party, and a plan which will preserve the integrity and autonomy of the Socialist party." *Socialist World,* February 1922; February 1924. The Socialist party continued its alliance with the CPPA and its efforts to secure a "labor party," while retaining its identity, through the 1924 presidential campaign.

EVD to Carl Sandburg

December 9, 1922
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Carl:

You will always be close to me too. Close as a young brother. You can hardly know how your loving message warmed my heart. Each line and word touched a responsive chord. If you ever get "those hands of mine in a poem"—and I know you will for it is in your heart—it will be wondrous big and beautiful for it will be the radiant reflection of your big and beautiful self.

No, dear Carl, I did not leave your blessed cottage home out there in the little jungle you are trying to save from civilization for my heart is still there. I enjoyed every moment under your happy and hospitable roof. Dear Mrs. Sandburg and her sweet-souled mother and the three darling little gods of your heavenly household, how vividly and smilingly and whole-heartedly you are all before me this morning, and what a beautiful and inviting picture you present to my glad eyes! We shall meet again and meanwhile my wife and brother and his wife and daughter, all of us join as one in love and blessing to all of you, and I am, while the stars shine,

Yours loyally,
Eugene V. Debs

TLS, IU, Sandburg Papers.

EVD to Joseph E. Cohen

December 14, 1922
Terre Haute, Indiana

My very dear Joe:

A million thanks to you for your more than beautiful letter to Theodore this morning and a million more, all from my deepest heart, to the generous-souled comrade who all but overwhelms us with another check! Theodore has written you for us both.[1] There is nothing I can add in the way of words for what my heart has to say cannot be expressed upon the written page.

Yes, my loyal and beloved comrade, in a few weeks more I shall be ready for action again, ready to give and to give freely and without reserve the best I have and all I have to the cause. How happy I shall be to give you and the comrades at Philadelphia[2] a date that will serve your convenience I need not say to you. I have the sense somehow that we shall have a great demonstration there followed by a revival of organization such as the comrades have not heretofore experienced. There never was a time when the materials were so ready at hand. We are indebted to the very destructive forces that for a time seemed to threaten with annihilation for the conditions which now make possible a far greater movement than we have ever had before. Meetings are wanted everywhere and at every point the houses will be packed to overflowing and the enthusiasm such as is possible only to the devotees of socialism. With affection and gratitude beyond measure,

Yours always,
Eugene V. Debs

Loving greetings to dear Comrades Jaffee, Harry Parker, Harry Peters and others![3]

TLS (with handwritten note), NNU Tam, Debs Collection.

1. In a letter dated December 14, 1922, Theodore Debs wrote to Cohen to thank him for "the check for $250" that Cohen had sent to Debs. InTI, Debs Collection.

2. On December 9, 1922, Theodore Debs wrote to Cohen to outline Debs's plans to speak in Cleveland and Canton, Ohio, New York City, Chicago, and elsewhere when he had "completed his recuperation." Theodore was "sure that Gene will strain a point to favor you and the Philadelphia comrades." InTI, Debs Collection.

3. As noted, Lena Jaffe was secretary of the Socialist party in Philadelphia; Harry Parker, a Philadelphia Cigar Makers' Union officer, had served as train manager of the Red Special.

EVD to Charles W. Ervin

December 18, 1922
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Charley Ervin:

You can hardly know with what a shock your letter announcing your severance with the Call[1] came to me and with what deep regret, to put it mildly, I have contemplated the circumstances which led to your resignation. I had long since cherished the conviction that you comrades of the Call staff were one in spirit, in your mutual personal loyalty and appreciation and in working together to save the Call and to make it the great light and power it should be in our movement. I had been brought to this conviction partly by the desperate fight you were compelled to make for self-preservation and the trial and grief you were sharing, and partly by my faith in and respect for each member of the staff, persuaded in my own mind that whatever else might tear apart in the ugly and bitter factional strife that was raging, here at least were a little group of comrades who would stick and fight as an example to others and whom hell itself could not tear apart. But your letter shattered my delusion and I feel a keen sense of disappointment though of course I do not allow myself to grow despondent or discouraged over it for whatever else may happen that is a thing I am steeled against if I have to stand alone and face a hostile world.

I note carefully all you say and you will know without any word from me that I approve your past policy in all things, that I think you did the work for the Call in a way no other comrade in the party could have done, that you have been a tower of strength and inspiration to the whole American movement, that you

TL (incomplete), MiDW, Archives of Labor History and Urban Affairs, Gould Collection.

1. Ervin's resignation as editor-manager was announced in the *Call* on December 13, 1922. In a statement Ervin said he "tendered my resignation last May but was compelled to stay on, owing to the financial condition of the Call. . . . Circumstances have arisen that have compelled me to take the step of severing my relations with the paper at once." The story accompanying Ervin's statement noted that "in recent months he frequently urged the Board of Managers to relieve him of his double duties as editor-manager. Finally, upon his insistence, the board accepted his resignation." In a letter from Theodore Debs to David Karsner, December 20, 1922, Theodore wrote that "we never dreamed that anyone on the inside opposed his policy and least of all that any of the Call staff would attack his policy in a way to force him to resign," but he did not identify Ervin's critics or the nature of their opposition.

InTI, Debs Collection. David Karsner was named manager-editor of the *Call* in March 1923. Theodore Debs to David Karsner, March 8, 1923. InTI, Debs Collection.

David Karsner to EVD

December 20, 1922
New York City

My Dear Gene:—

I have not ignored your letter of the eighth in which you say you cannot approve of "Talks With Debs In Terre Haute." Your letter, its text and its spirit, has not left my mind for one single instant since its reception. It is of such a character that I could not possibly reply to it immediately, for I wanted time in which to turn the whole subject, book and all, over in my mind. Then, I have been terribly busy with my own work, which never seems to let up, plus the distress in the office due to Ervin's resignation, and anticipation due to a new management.[1]

Your letter was not a surprise to me, for it had its forerunner in one from Theodore, and when I received the latter I felt that it would only be a matter of days before a similar statement came from you. Hence, I was at least psychologically prepared for what under different circumstances, might easily have proved a heart-break; but thank heavens, each of us has but [one] heart and it may only be broken once. Also, each of us has but one set of fundamental illusions and these may be dispelled and dissipated only once. New ones may spring up under kind and tender auspices, but I rather think that we are not so certain of the second and further crops.

So you see, dear Gene, you did not really hurt me. I am very sad, of course, because I know I have unwittingly and unconsciously brought mental pain and stress to you and Theodore, and I know that I would a thousand times rather have the full stress of annoyance upon myself than be the instrument to bring it to you and Theodore.

Still, I am happy that you were frank and outspoken. I am genuinely glad that you did not hesitate to convey your feeling about what I had written in the book, although you have been vague, as Theodore has been, as to where, in what specific sentence or statement I disclosed "private and domestic matters" concerning you that would in any sense bring discredit upon you and whomsoever may be connected with you by whatever ties. On the other hand, I never in my life heard one person malign you or speak a word in relation to you that could possibly be interpreted by me to your discredit.

Of course, you do not think, nor does Theodore, that I had any motive in writing of you other than to serve you and to give myself that pleasure. I was guilty of loving you, and, being a writer and something of a wilful dreamer who can occasionally express his dreams in word pictures, I wrote of you. I have always considered my relation with you on a personal basis, and you would {appear} the same to me if you were not a Socialist, nor had never been identified with the splendid gestures you have made in behalf of ideals. My affections are entirely personal. I do not love the world as you do, nor do I wish to embrace it; nor do I wish it to embrace me. I want it to let me alone. I want to be loved by persons. I can see my friends. I cannot visualize mankind in the sense of beauty and fidelity.

But let me drift back to this book which you have disavowed as being an expression of yourself and your moods. It is my third book.[2] I have been in labor with it for six months and now it is born. Were it my first I should probably be terribly pained. But my vanity as an author is now less than a cipher. I have had the thrill of seeing my name stamped in gold, and have heard praise and blame and felt the blight of indifference of my work, and none of that bothers me any more.

I desired to do a painting of you in words. I am not a sculptor, nor can I use the brush on canvas. But I may, I hope, do a fair stroke with words now and then. How could I best paint your moods and expressions if I did not embrace whatever chances were mine to catch you in repose and otherwise. If you knew I was painting you, that I would put my impressions into print, wouldn't you have been careful in what you said to me, and wouldn't that have destroyed the spontaneity of the portrait? I am not a stenographer. Even if I had taken notes in your presence I could only have caught the "leads" to your thoughts and reconstructed them in a framework of conversation. As a reporter I have done that for many years. Because I love you as a man and am so very fond of you as a friend I took interest in what I was attempting to do to just that extent. I was oblivious of what you, or anyone else would think of my job.

Suppose you had told Dykaar or Mayer,[3] the sculptors, that they have erred in getting your portrait in clay, bronze or marble. Suppose you felt that certain features or curves should be lessened and others brought into high-light. After all, my dear Gene, they are the doers of the job, and although you might be dissatisfied with the artistic result, they might feel toward it very differently. No man can say how much an artist puts of himself into his work. It may not show on the canvas, or in the bronze, but {he} who looks upon it with an eye of

scrutiny can tell at a glance whether or not the work was one of love or one of casual duty.

I put aside my novel,[4] in which I am intensely interested, and which the publishers want, to do this portrait of you last summer. I did not want to write a biography, or a sequel to my former book. I wanted to do something that had never been done to you before, although I gladly admit that I had some patterns from which to work—Traubel's "With Walt Whitman In Camden" for instance. Traubel's is a heroic job. Mine is much smaller, and less pretentious. Moreover, it is more human than Horace's for the reason that I had an active subject, one whose interests were, in a sense, pitched upon a more active field. I spoke of all that in my preface.

You and Theodore take me to task severely for mentioning the conversation I had with your sister. Mrs. Mailloux knew in advance that I was a writer. More than that, she knew I was a writer who had written extensively about you. She called me to her home "to put me right," as she said at that time, about some matters concerning your background. Also, she desired to state to me her own point of view with respect to them. I read her statement as published in my book no less than twenty times, and I cannot see one single word in it that could be considered a breach of confidence, an intellectual impropriety, or an indifference on my part to the relation between you and Mrs. Mailloux. She said nothing to me that would in any sense cast a reflection upon you or herself. And what she said about the struggles of your parents is to their everlasting credit, and is important to the public only insofar as it relates to you, who are a public personage, one in whom the world is interested and wants to know about.[5]

Look how far back the biographers of Lincoln have gone to disclose his beginnings. Of course some matters are personal and sacred and should never be given to the public. Still, Lincoln's historians do not seem to have observed the sanctity of his very intimate life. Surely, I have never written one sentence about {you} that could not be known, and which a number of people knew, before I touched it. Mrs. Mailloux told me that she intended to write her own book. That proved to me that she was willing to give the world not only the information she gave to me, but her own point of view with it. She did not ask me to keep what she said to me in confidence. Mrs. Mailloux was scarcely in a position to impose a confidence upon me.

Of my own volition, I felt that her purpose in calling me to her home was to inform me in a way that I would be able to weigh what she had said to me should I again decide to write of you from the standpoint of biography. It was quite natural that I should have told you about the conversation I had with her and let you weigh it yourself.

I do not see that I have placed you and Mrs. Mailloux in a contradictory light except as to matters of fact and viewpoint. Suppose she does think differently from you? What of it? I have a sister in Philadelphia who will have nothing to do with me because I wrote of you when you who were in prison at the time. I know that if I were a person of any import and should be written about, my biographers would consider it their right to speak not only of my own personality but of those who had been in my life. For example, a few years ago a book was published about Mark Twain. The writer dealt at great length with Mrs. Clemens and Mark's personal friends, and concluded that these persons had been detriments and handicaps to Twain's larger intellectual and spiritual stature.

You say I have been inaccurate. I must fall back upon what seemed to me to be the best tools with which I could work. I did not attempt a photographic or a stenographic piece of writing. I did put in color here and there, and embellish and soften or harden as the case might be, only be sure at all times that I did not impair the main subject or theme, which I wanted to rise up out of my printed pages like a great flame of living light and love. I do not consider that I made you publicly rebuke Tucker. I pray that Tucker doesn't think so. The incident is smoothed off and none will care anything about it. It isn't important one way or the other.

As to your own statements: every great man and busy one finds confidants in whom he might repose such intimate tasks. It is interesting, and hundreds of people have done it. They have done similar things. For example, some of the exact phrasing of Lincoln's Gettysburg speech was not original with him. "A government of the people, by the people and for the people" was inspired by a sermon of Theodore Parker of Boston. Lincoln liked the phrase and used it. I don't think that fact minimizes the pure crystal beauty of the Gettysburg speech. We know, for example, that William Bayard Hale[6] wrote The New Freedom, by Woodrow Wilson. The latter admits as much in his preface, and if he had not done so, Hale informed me himself. Traubel frequently wrote speeches for people to piece out his own frugal earnings, and if I had thought about it at the time I was doing his life I would {have} said so. It is interesting to the extent that it relates to him who is interesting enough to be written about.

Your statements to me on Russia, socialism, and communism,[7] and allied matter are reinforced by your own public utterances. Every one may know them if they care to be so informed. As to Mr. Fairbanks and his string of blue ribbons: I spoke kindly of Mr. Fairbanks for I know I should like him and I felt his personality through what you and Theodore had told me of him. I did not embarrass him by

attributing to him an active interest in a race track, when he ran a brewery. Anyway, I might have been mistaken about the point.

But Gene, you were talking to me. I was the interested listener. I was not listening casually although you talked casually, and I would be more likely to remember what you said than you would recall afterward. It depends upon who is speaking as to whether we remember what they say. Personality and greatness do not permit listeners to hear with casual ears.

Of course I am dreadfully sorry you do not like the book. It will give me no happiness to know that it pains you. But I cannot disavow it. I cannot repudiate a work in which I poured my heart and devoted myself as intensely as I did over this latest volume.

The book is to be published on Saturday or later in the week. I could not prevent its publication because I believe in it as an artistic work in biography or memoirs. You could have prevented its publication had you served notice on the publishers. An act of that sort would, of course, have placed me in a very awkward position from the standpoint of the public and the thousands who read my writings day by day. But as to that, that would not scare me off, nor cause me to run to cover with explanations. For I have integrity in what I did in that book, and I allowed for objections and sharp criticisms in my lengthy preface to it.

You will remember, Gene, that I asked you to read the manuscript before The Call had the book, before it appeared serially. You declined to see it. On September 11 you wrote me: "Don't wait for me to see the manuscript of your book about me, or anything. You know I have full faith in you and all you do. Go right along with my unqualified approval in advance."

Subsequently, Theodore wrote me—after the book began to appear. One sentence from his letters reads: "We have an occasional smile in reading 'Talks With Debs In Terre Haute,' as you relate incidents so characteristic of Gene's daily conduct. Criticism of all kinds is sure to follow and that is evidence sure enough that you have written in a way to arouse the minds and emotions of your readers."[8]

Dear Gene: I have been perfectly frank with myself, as you were with yourself in writing to me. Your objections, which amount to a disavowal of my book, make me very sad. I am sorry. They set aside, obliterate in fact, my happy ambition to write your complete biography some day. More than that, you have shunted me forever from biography, and perhaps, after all, I invaded a field in which I had no passport of qualification.

My feelings for you, my high estimation of your intrinsic self shall never wane. I am only very sad.

Yours faithfully,
David Karsner

TLc, NN Kars.

1. As noted, Karsner was made editor-manager of the *Call* in March 1923.
2. *Horace Traubel* (1919) and *Debs: His Authorized Life and Letters* (1919).
3. As noted, both Moses Dykaar and Louis Mayer had done busts of Debs.
4. Karsner's *Up to Thirty* was published in 1923.
5. In *Talks With Debs* (pp. 70-83), Karsner recorded Debs's sister's account of Debs's parents' migration from Alsace, their marriage, and their early struggles to become established in Terre Haute, including her emphasis on Debs's father's having "come from well-to-do parents in Colmar" and his "threatening to commit suicide" if Debs's mother had not joined him in New York, where they were married in 1849.
6. William Bayard Hale (1869-1924), who divided a career between the ministry and journalism, published a campaign biography of Woodrow Wilson in 1912, and in 1914 compiled and edited a volume of Wilson's political addresses, published under the title *The New Freedom*. Wilson's introduction to the book credits it to Hale.
7. In a number of places in *Talks With Debs*, Karsner quoted Debs's comments on the Russian Revolution and the Soviet government. In general, Debs hailed the revolution and praised Lenin and Trotsky but deplored some of the policies of the Soviet government and remarked that "Russia . . . has actually swapped dictators." He repeated his belief that American socialists could not be "dictated to" by the Third International in Moscow.
8. Theodore Debs to Karsner, November 7, 1922. InTI, Debs Collection.

EVD to Theodore Dreiser

December 21, 1922
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Theodore Dreiser:

You will find something of interest and something to smile over in the enclosed editorial clipped from a local paper.[1] The writer has something of the vision and understanding of a mole. Needless to say we dissent emphatically from the conclusion so loftily stated in the next to the last paragraph.

Theodore and I and all of our family join in greetings of the season and all wishes to you and yours for a happy and fruitful New Year. This needs no answer.

Yours always,
E. V. Debs

TLS, PU, Dreiser Papers.

1. The editorial, "About Paul Dresser," appeared in the *Terre Haute Tribune* on December 20, 1922. The writer praised Dresser and predicted that " 'On The Banks of the Wabash' will still be sung when oncoming generations have forgotten there was 'A Hoosier Holiday,' a 'Carrie Gerhart' [*sic*] or any others of Theodore's brisk bits of realism."

Theodore Dreiser to EVD

December 26, 1922
New York City

Dear Mr. Debs:

Well, I'm glad your out of the sanitarium & back on your native grass. I have read the Editorial and apart from feeling that I may be de trop in mixing in this monument business I don't mind at all. I have no influence with the New York Times. It has never been friendly to me. And why it should rise at this inoportune moment to say a good word for me is beyond me.[1] I might even suspect a subterranean vain of malice if I were given to suspecting. But I didn't start this Terre Haute or Indiana business and having gotten the family consent for Terre Haute I certainly may be permitted to back out. The sketch of Paul in *Twelve Men*[2] will certainly clear me of any desire to rob him of his worthy fame and there's an end to it. I wish they would erect a memorial as they planned since they stopped another city from doing so but beyond that I have nothing to say.

The seasonal compliments to you & thank you for the clipping.

Theodore Dreiser

ALS, EVD Foundation, Debs Home.

1. The editorial on Paul Dresser and Theodore Dreiser in the *Terre Haute Tribune*, December 20, 1922, opened with a long quotation from a December 17, 1920, *New York Times* article that noted that in the squabble over a memorial to Dresser "there is no mention of the fact that he was a brother of Theodore Dreiser" even though "Dreiser's 'Hoosier Holiday' is an indispensable document for the study of the peculiar Hoosier civilization."

2. As noted, Dreiser's *Twelve Men* included a sympathetic biographical sketch of Paul Dresser and an appreciation of Dresser's work.

Harendranath Maitra[1] to EVD

1923
Rockville, Indiana

Dear Mr. Debs,

I come from Calcutta India—and here on a lecture tour.

I consider it a privileg pleasure & duty to come to see you. It is our Pilgrimage. It is not possible for me to come either today or tomorrow or on Sunday I gather. But I am coming to Terra Haute on Monday at about 12 in the morning (noon) & as my train for New York does not leave before 4 o'c in the afternoon I should be very glad if you would be kind enough to see me if I call on you at about 1 o'c.

I don't know the train time from Terre Haute to New York. If it is impossible to see you at that time if there is a train going to New York at about 10 or 11 in the Evening I shall be very glad to call on you sometime on Monday at about 7-30 or 8 in the evening.

Will you kindly write me a line. I shall be very thankful.

Yours very sincerely,
Harendranath Maitra
c/o General Delivery
Rockville, Indiana

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Harendranath Maitra was editor of *A Voice from India*, published in London, and author of *Hinduism: The World Ideal*, which was published in London and New York in 1916 with an introduction by G. K. Chesterton. Debs's answer to Maitra's letter has not been found, but in a letter from Maitra to Debs dated May 23, 1925, Maitra reminded Debs that he "came to your place about two years ago." Maitra's interview with Chesterton, "India for the Indians," appeared in the *New York Times*, May 27, 1916.

Theodore Debs to Upton Sinclair

January 9, 1923
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Upton Sinclair:

Please pardon my delay in answering your letter of the 21st. inst. Gene has been in bed suffering intense pain with acute lumbago these past two weeks in consequence of which correspondence has been

sadly neglected. Please allow me to disabuse your mind at once in regard to our having any other feeling toward you than that of kindness, gratefulness, and devoted comradeship. At the time you wrote me about the paper Gene was at the sanitarium at Elmhurst and I sent him your letter and he meant to give it attention from day to day and week to week but on account of his physical inability to attend to his usual duties it had to be put off and suffer neglect along with many other letters and matters which otherwise would have had attention long ago. I am glad to say that Gene is improving now and that all the indications are that he will soon be able to resume his former activities in the service of the cause.

If dear Ruth LePrade is "bitterly incensed" against you we have not heard of it. We understood that she had some fault to find with the manner in which the book[1] was gotten out by you, but this concerned only the details and we thought this of no particular consequence. She never wrote us a line complaining against you or in fact about the book. The only word of an objectional nature she sent us was in regard to your referring to Gene as an "old man," but the spirit in which you did this could not possibly have offended and I need hardly assure you that Gene is not of the kind who takes offense so easily in matters of such slight consequence, especially in dealing with one we know to be a devoted friend and comrade {such} as you have always proved yourself to be. Dear Ruth had a different feeling about it, unduly sensitive no doubt on Gene's account, but I cannot think she would long hold that against you or allow it to rankle in unkindly remembrance. If you will permit me the liberty to suggest that you drop her a kindly personal line I feel sure the response would come promptly on her part for she is, as you know, a great, tender-hearted comrade, with a high sense of what is due to others and an altogether beautiful spirit even though it be supersensitive at times when those to whom she is devoted are concerned. I hope for the sake of you both that you will see your way clear to do this. You are both dear to us and you should be and must be to each other. There are too many great things for us to face together to permit us to face each other in any spirit of antagonism over personal matters of minor consequence. Allow me to take this occasion to thank you heartily in behalf of Gene and myself and all of us for the service you so freely rendered in connection with the publication of the book. We know you did your very best, busy as you were, and that you did it with all of the grace of a comradely heart. I am very sorry to know the work entailed such a financial loss on your part[2] and at a later time when Gene takes up his work again and we once more have an income which we have not had for several years, we will gladly, if you permit

us to do so, share this loss with you or bear the entire amount, and in this we would be but doing our simple duty by you. It grieves us to know that you should have to bear such a loss after having gratuitously rendered such valuable service at a time when you were so engrossed in your own affairs and when it was a matter of such vital consequence to Gene in particular and to all of us in general.

Please let me assure you that there is nothing in our hearts but the kindliest feeling and the warmest friendship for you and if at any time in the future we can serve you as you have served us in the past we shall be happy indeed to be permitted to do so.

With the greetings of the season and all kind wishes to you and Mrs. Sinclair and to the comrades about you, in which we all join heartily, I remain as ever,

Yours fraternally,
Theodore Debs

TLS, InU, Lilly Library, Sinclair MSS.

1. *Debs and the Poets.*

2. In a letter from Theodore Debs to Ruth Le Prade, February 20, 1923, Theodore wrote that Sinclair had "advised us . . . that he had lost some thirteen hundred dollars" on *Debs and the Poets* but had "corrected the error" and "had come out about even on the book." Theodore was "distressed" that Le Prade had been concerned "over mere matters of a business nature." InTI, Debs Collection.

Francis T. Hayes[1] to EVD

January 10, 1923
Cleveland, Ohio

My dear Mr. Debs:

On behalf of The City Club of Cleveland may I invite you to address a luncheon meeting of the club in the near future?

I believe you are familiar with the type of organization The City Club is and the character of meeting planned.

Our meetings are held at noon on Saturday, and the dates of January 20th, February 10th, March 10th, 17th and 24th are now open on our calendar for this meeting.

Will you let me know as soon as possible whether you can accept our invitation and what date will be preferable to you?

Very sincerely
Francis T. Hayes
Secretary

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Francis T. ("Pat") Hayes was a Western Reserve University graduate and Cleveland businessman who served as secretary of the City Club of Cleveland from 1916 to 1923 and was credited with making the club a nationally respected "forum where men of all parties, creeds, and races, could meet to discuss ideas for the improvement of political, social, and economic conditions." Debs's old friend Peter Witt was chiefly responsible for the club's invitation to Debs, which badly split the governing body and led to the resignation of forty-seven members of the club. Thomas F. Campbell, *Freedom's Forum: The City Club 1912-1962* (Cleveland, 1963), 21, 70-71.

EVD to Theodore Dreiser

January 11, 1923
Terre Haute, Indiana

Dear Theodore Dreiser:

Returning to my office after some days' absence I find your good letter of the 26th. ult. awaiting me. I have noted with interest all you say in regard to Paul and the plans for the memorial etc. You have certainly done your full part by Terre Haute and you are modest enough in your personal expectations. The matter is being agitated daily[1] and is taking form and I think will result soon in definite and satisfactory action. I shall be away from here much of the time from now on but I shall of course be glad to help promote the plans in any and every way I can. All wishes to you for a New Year of happiness and fulfillment.

Yours sincerely,
E. V. Debs

TLS, PU, Dreiser Papers.

1. An editorial in the *Terre Haute Tribune*, January 11, 1923, noted that the Dresser memorial would not be "accomplished in a week, or a year." As noted, the delay lasted more than forty years and Dresser's remains were not moved from Chicago.

EVD to David Karsner

January 17, 1923
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear David:—

There has been ample time for careful reading and consideration of your good letter of the 20th. ult. but not until now have I been

able to answer. On the very day it was received I was stricken with acute lumbago, an unusually severe attack, which put me to bed and kept me writhing in pain day and night for almost three weeks. But I am up again and Ryan Walker will understand how I feel as I exclaim "for such relief much thanks" for he and his darling Maudie once ministered to me when I suffered a similar attack and saved my life to tell the story.

I am not going to undertake a detailed answer to your letter. From your point of view you are right and I offer no criticism whatever. From my point there is objection which it would do no good to attempt to make clear to you and vain to try to have you understand. You think, according to your recent review in the Call of the criticism of the Whitman critics,[1] that anything one human {being} says to another, whatever it may be, may with propriety be published. In this I very positively disagree with you when you say that if a man does not want his word published he should speak to deaf ears. There are things in my heart of a nature to be heard by open and receptive ears that would be insulted and outraged by publication and serve no good purpose whatever.

There are certain delicacies and privacies among intimates which it would be the grossest offense and impropriety in my opinion to post in public places, as much an offense to the public as to the individual whose privacies were exposed with harm to them and good to no one.

Quite well do I understand that in writing these pages you were the artist and not the reporter. I would have had you write in no other capacity, but you were no less bound as an artist to paint a true picture than you would have been as a reporter to produce an accurate transcript of your subject's sayings and doings. You are absolutely right in saying that a man is more apt to be himself when he is not on his guard but I think you will also admit that there are certain physical as well as mental attitudes in which he might be caught unawares which he would not like the public to have and which the public should not have and would not only have no interest in having but might be positively offended in having thrust upon it. For myself I do not like the idea of being taken unawares in being photographed for public inspection, especially when matters of personal intimacy and private concern involving others are at stake.

In the few casual words we had about Frank Harris there is given an impression which does him injustice as coming from me for it does not at all represent my feeling toward him. Had I known what I had to say of him was for publication I should have made myself clear with reference to him instead of the incidental remarks that were

made in our random conversation. But even if I had been accurately quoted the deduction from my remarks may or may not have reflected what I would have meant to convey as my impression of the man and his work.

As you made no notes of course you could not quote me literally and in relying upon your memory at a time when you were engrossed with other tasks you made a number of inaccurate statements for which I make full allowance for it could hardly have been otherwise under the circumstances.

I know how conscientiously you strove to do your best, more by far on my account than yours, and that would atone for all shortcomings were any held against you, which they are not, although they were multiplied a thousand fold.

You have me show how the capitalist system is to be transformed into a working class republic between the election in November and the inauguration in the March following.[2] That is your statement and not mine. It is purely utopian as I regard it for I do not believe the change will come through any election or that it will come along the lines or in the way set forth in your statement. It will come through upheaval in some form as it did in Russia and as it has always come. The blind and brutal plutocracy will never allow it [to] come any other way. But the book is also filled with magnificent passages, many of them that over-estimate me enormously and are all too generous in their expressions and implications. You say these things in your fine way, some of them very much better than I could say them myself.

Now let me say, dear David, that you are not going to be shifted or shunted from any line of writing you had in contemplation. You will follow up your work without any hindrance or deflection as the result of this experience. It had in it a sting of disappointment that brought an hour of chagrin and dismay, but this will pass away. Take it not too seriously. If you have erred you have done so conscientiously and that makes full restitution.

I know that you offered to submit the proofs when the book was completed but I had no idea at that time of the nature of the work and you will remember the urgency of the demand for immediate return of the MS when I was at the sanitarium and had difficulty in meeting even the most pressing demands. But no matter about this nor about anything else in the way of objection. The work has been done, the book has been written and stands and there is no use to waste any time over what it might have been. You did your best and you are satisfied with your work and that shall suffice. I am satisfied to see in it only what is to be commended and to inspire me with a deep sense of gratitude for all it contains that has your heart-throbs

in it and that bears such beautiful and assuring evidence of your infinitely precious devotion. With all love and gratefulness to you, dear David, I am as always,

Yours faithfully,
E. V. Debs

TLS, NN Kars.

1. In "Here There and Everywhere" (*Call*, January 5, 1923), Karsner approved the direct quotations attributed to Walt Whitman in an article by Sadakichi Hartmann, titled "Conversations With Walt Whitman." Whitman, said Karsner, had "no business saying things about people . . . that he would hesitate to write over his own name."
2. In *Talks With Debs* (p. 123), Debs is quoted as saying that "if the people were to elect a Socialist government . . . that would itself serve notice in November that the capitalists would be expected to vacate their high and mighty premises. That would give them four months time . . . far longer than the capitalists give their employees when they do not need them anymore."

EVD to Algernon Lee

February 5, 1923
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Comrade Lee:

Some ten days ago I wrote to Comrade Bertha Mailly in regard to sending some of my personal books, scrap books etc. to the Rand School and asking if the School would care to have them. As there has been no answer I surmise that either my letter or her answer has gone astray in the mails. If the things I have proposed sending are for lack of room or for any other reason not desirable of course I wish to frankly know it for I would not wish in the least to impose on the School.[1]

Please let me take this occasion to thank you right warmly for your loving remembrances from abroad. The precious card souvenirs you were so kind and thoughtful as to send with your signature and those of comrades prominent in the movement abroad are little treasures the value of which I more than appreciate.

With greetings of affection and all best wishes to you and Mrs. Lee I am,

Yours always,
E. V. Debs

TLS, NNU Tam, Debs Collection.

1. Lee's answer to Debs has not been found, but on February 13, 1923, Debs

wrote again to Lee to thank him "for the cordial reception . . . of my humble offering" and to tell him that "the material in my collection will go to you this week." On February 27, 1923, Theodore Debs wrote to Lee to tell him that "Gene will be glad to know that the five cases of books, papers, etc. reached their destination safely and are now housed and will be cared for in the Rand School where he hopes they will be of some service to those engaged in Research work." InTI, Debs Collection.

EVD to Francis T. Hayes

February 12, 1923
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Hayes:

Since advising you of my acceptance[1] of the invitation to address the City Club of Cleveland extended by you in behalf of the Club I have had occasion to learn of the disagreement of opinion among the members as to the propriety of sponsoring me as a guest and speaker and of the dissension incident to the discussion of the question, resulting in the protest and resignation of a number of members, and feeling disinclined, as I certainly do, to aggravate such variance of opinion among the membership or to obtrude myself where there is any question of my being welcome or as to the right of being heard in a forum avowedly open to free speech, I beg to withdraw my acceptance and to respectfully decline the invitation of the Club.

In arriving at this conclusion I beg to assure you, and through you the members of the Club, that I have not the slightest feeling of resentment toward those who objected to me on account of my opinions as I have long since become accustomed to such opposition and it has taught me to not only freely accord to every one the right to speak according to his light, but in the spirit of true tolerance to encourage him in doing so, more especially the misguided brother who would forfeit his own right to be heard by denying me mine.

Please convey to the Club and to each of its members without regard to his opinion or attitude my sincere thanks for the kind invitation extended and for the flattering consideration bestowed upon me in connection therewith, and with all cordial regards and good wishes I remain,

Yours faithfully,
[Eugene V. Debs]

TLc, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Debs's letter of acceptance has not been found, but in a letter to Peter Witt

dated January 13, 1923, Debs told Witt that "I have just received and accepted the formal invitation from Secretary Hayes, though I am not certain as to the date on account of being still in a state of convalescence." Western Reserve Historical Society, Witt Papers.

Theodore Debs to Upton Sinclair

February 13, 1923
Terre Haute, Indiana

Dear Comrade Sinclair:

Please excuse me for not answering sooner your letter of the 30th. ult. with enclosure of statements in regard to "Debs and the Poets." I am very glad to learn and it is a relief to me indeed to know that you were in error about having come out thirteen hundred dollars behind on the book. You have contributed your time and services so freely out of your busy life that it distressed me to think you should have sacrificed such a large amount of money besides and the report you now make of having come out substantially even is appreciated accordingly.

Since your letter was received I have also received a very courteous one giving full information as to the books on hand etc. from Conkey & Co.[1]

It is certainly very kind and generous on the part of Ruth and Mrs. Gartz and you to turn over all these books to Gene and I wish you to know that he and I are both very grateful to you all. We would rather the books could have been disposed of and that the proceeds could have gone in full to reimburse Ruth and Mrs. Gartz and yourself who made the book and went to all sorts of trouble and expense to have it fulfill its mission of love and high sense of duty without ever a thought of any kind of compensation in return.

But we shall now try to sell the books at Gene's meetings when they begin the latter part of this month and we shall make such use of the proceeds as will be for the best interests of the party and that I think will be the better way to apply them to have the approval of all concerned.

We shall certainly remember the kindness and the loyal devotion of all of you comrades to whom we are indebted for such precious services and now for these generous favors, and I need hardly say that we shall hold ourselves ready at any time in the future, and do so gladly, to reciprocate in any way in our power.

Please accept our especial thanks for the box of autographed books

shipped here by you which came in good order. We shall be able to make good use of these in connection with our correspondence and office relations.

Thanking you again and again for your kindness so often and so generously made manifest and with every good wish that your own work may prosper and that all your plans may be successful and all your aspirations realized, I remain as ever,

Yours fraternally,
Theodore Debs

TLS, InU, Lilly Library, Sinclair MSS.

1. In a letter to Theodore Debs, February 6, 1923, A. E. Wilcox, treasurer of the W. B. Conkey printing firm in Hammond, Indiana, notified Debs that his firm had on hand 410 copies of *Debs and the Poets* in cloth binding and 700 in paper binding. The books, along with the printing plates, Wilcox said, were "your property," according to instructions from Sinclair. InTI, Debs Collection.

EVD to Algernon Lee

February 16, 1923
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Comrade Lee:

The collection of books etc. went to you by express yesterday. There were five cases. Please see that that number is delivered to you. You will find the express receipt enclosed. The packing had to be hurriedly done and therefore not as carefully as could have been desired. It will take you some little time to get the books and papers in order but you will no doubt have the comrades there to help you in their leisure hours. You will find some papers that are old and I think of some value. Please see that the Locomotive Firemen's Magazines are placed in their proper order and taken care of as I think they will be in demand for future reference and I believe it is the only complete file up to the time I severed my connection with it in existence. I have just received a letter from W.S. Carter, Ex-President of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen, and now at the head of its research department, who succeeded me as editor,[1] making certain inquiries regarding the early history of the organization and informing me that his magazine files were incomplete. I have advised him that my files had been turned over to the Rand School where they would be accessible for reference purposes. I hope the collection I sent you will be of some use to the School. I hated

to part with some of the things that have been with me so long and with which I grew up but they were of no use here while at the School they may be of service to others.

Affectionately your comrade,
E. V. Debs

TLS, NNU Tam, Debs Collection.

1. As noted, Carter edited the *Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen Magazine* from 1894 to 1903 and was president of the union from 1909 to 1922.

EVD to "Push" [Lincoln Phifer]

February 16, 1923
Terre Haute, Indiana

My very dear "Push":—

It would be utterly vain for me to try to tell you with what emotions and with what a deep sense of appreciation I have read your very kind letter and the accompanying copy of your story about the Appeal.[1] I went over the MS last night at my home after all the day's doings were over so that I might do so in quiet and without interruption. I need not say to you how deeply I was moved as I went over these reminiscent pages in the actual writing of which you and I were hand in hand and walked and worked and wrought together through those years of vision and trial, of tragedy and revelation. I am very glad our beloved old comrade "Rich"[2] suggested the writing of this extraordinary story and when you write him I wish you would be good enough to send him and his wife and dear ones my love and tell him I can never forget the golden hours spent at his lovely home.

The story {is} admirably written. You have succeeded in summarising the essential facts in a remarkable way even for your gifted and versatile pen. Please let me thank you out of the deepest heart of me for your beautiful tribute which I could only wish myself far more deserving of. You have taken advantage here as you have of every opportunity you have ever had since first we met, ofttimes yourself creating the opportunity, to praise and honor me and magnify my humble work to attest your fine devotion and express your generous appreciation. All I can say in return is that I have held you in the same affectionate regard and have had for you and your splendid ability and your fine idealism the same appreciation, even though it has had to remain unexpressed.

I am soon to leave for Chicago to enter upon a speaking and

organizing campaign in the interest of the Socialist party and of the labor unions and I will take the MS of your story with me and try to have it published by the national office or by some other publisher, and if I succeed I will of course see to it that you are furnished with as many copies as you may desire. The only trouble is that just now the national office is bankrupt and I do not know of a socialist publisher who is more than a jump or two ahead of the collector.

I must thank you also for your very kind invitation to visit you the coming summer. Nothing would make me happier. We should {wander} together again over the old trails and we should live over again the days we sat side by side in the service of the cause and stood shoulder to shoulder fighting its battles, and when in the crisis of your life I was called in for consultation, prescribed and saved your life with my professional skill, and am still awaiting the fee for such professional service. The flickering pulse I always suspected of being an affected symptom, to evade payment which artifice was always betrayed by the twinkle in your eye. Well, all is forgiven now, dear old comrade, and here are my two hands in token of my love. May this find you and your dear ones happy and prosperous as you deserve to be.

Yours always,
E. V. Debs

TLS, EVD Foundation, Debs Home.

1. No trace of Phifer's account of the *Appeal to Reason* has been found.
2. Probably E. N. Richardson, a Girard, Kansas, businessman and friend of Debs and Phifer who worked with them on the *Appeal to Reason*.

Sam S. Williams[1] to EVD

March 26, 1923
Cleveland, Ohio

My very dear Mr. Debs:—

At the beginning of what we trust shall be a mighty organization for good, it has been the pleasure of "The Boys" to vote you an Honorary Life Membership, and it is my pleasure to forward your Life Membership card herewith. May God bless you.

Yours fraternally
Pres.
The Sam S. Williams Voucher Club
Sam S. Williams

P.S. We are sending you card #2, card #1 was issued to Yours Truly.

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Williams's letterhead identifies him as president of "The Sam S. Williams Voucher Club, An Organization of Friendly Interest Toward Men Leaving Prison." He is listed as Reverend in the Cleveland city directories of the period.

Olga Kameneva[1] and M. Kalinin[2] to EVD

March 30, 1923
Moscow, Kremlin, USSR

Dear Comrade,

The Central Commission for fighting the After-Effects of the Famine congratulates you on your liberation from imprisonment, and your return to active work, one of the sides of which—your energetic and indefatigable efforts to assist the starving children of Soviet Russia—the Commission particularly appreciates.

We hope that you will, with your customary vigor, extend this campaign for relief.

We think it would be most advisable for you personally to visit Russia and become acquainted with the position in the former famine areas on the spot.

By the decision of the Commission of March 3rd we are instructed to invite you to come to Russia.

In case you acquiesce, you may receive a visa to enter the RSFSR from Com. Krestinsky[3] in Berlin.

Anticipating your early arrival, We are, with comradely greetings,

M. Kalinin
Chairman of Commission.

Olga Kameneva
Member of Commission and
Chief of Foreign Section.

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Olga Kameneva was the younger sister of Leon Trotsky and the wife of Lev B. Kamenev, who was president of the All-Russian Committee for Aid to the Hungry.

2. Mikhail Ivanovich Kalinin (1875-1946) was arrested and exiled countless times for antigovernment activity before the Russian Revolution of 1917 and held several positions of honor and power in the Soviet government thereafter. He was a founder and member of the editorial staff of *Pravda*, chairman of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR, and from 1938 to 1946 chairman of the Presidium of the

Supreme Soviet of the USSR. Among many honors bestowed on him, in 1931 the city of Tver was renamed in honor of Kalinin. He is buried on Red Square.

3. Nikolai Nikolaevich Kristinskii (1883-1938) was a Bolshevik attorney in St. Petersburg before the 1917 revolution, people's commissar of finance of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR) from 1918 to 1921, and political representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) in Germany from 1922 to 1930. He was deputy people's commissar of foreign affairs of the USSR from 1930 to 1937.

K. Mairova et al. to EVD

March 31, 1923
Kasan, USSR

To Comrade Debs in America—

We, the children of the Children's Homes bearing your name,[1] thank you as well as the children of American workers for the support we are receiving now through the International Workers' Relief. Owing to your care, we children in the Children's Colony are under comparatively better conditions as far as food, etc., is concerned.

The children's colony in which we live is a joint organization of eight children's homes and two babies' homes. We have at our disposal a park, a bath house and spacious buildings. In one work, the external conditions of our life would be favorable if it were not for the great scarcity in clothing (clothing, underwear, shoes) as well as school utensils (paper, crayons, pencils, pens, books, etc.) which greatly hampers our educational work.

Finally, we beg that you, yourself, should visit us and see how we live and under what conditions our child life goes on. We will be greatly thankful to you and will never forget your care of us.

Presidium of the Children's meeting:
K. Mairova
L. Antonova
L. Porshutkina
N. Solovieva
E. Zedrick
And Tartar signatures.

A true copy of the original: International Workers Relief, Kazan Rogolla

We, the children of the house Number Seventeen in the Children's Colony "Eugene V. Debs" are sending from Kazan to far America our brotherly greetings to the American workers and our child's

thanks for the help which you rendered to us, the children of the proletariat in Russia. We send also our child's thanks to the Comrade DEBS after whom our children's colony is named, and we express our most sincere wish to see our Comrade Debs here in Kasan in order to show him where and how we live.

With all our heart we invite Comrade Debs to come to us, to our Children's Colony.

The Children's Soviet
Signatures

International Workers' Relief Kazan

A true copy of the original Hans Rogalla Manager of the Branch Kazan of the I.W.R.

TLc (with translation), InTI, Debs Collection.

1. In "The Eugene V. Debs Home In Russia, Translation from the 'Izvestia Tasika' " (*Debs Magazine,* April 1923), it was reported that "the former summer resort Novikov" had been converted into "a Children's City . . . named after Eugene V. Debs, the great American labor leader and friend of the people."

M. Tomsky[1] and A. Andreyev[2] to EVD

April 5, 1923
Moscow, USSR

EUGENE DEBS

HAVING LEARNED OF YOUR WISH TO VISIT SOVIET RUSSIA WE SEND YOU HEARTY INVITATIONS STOP ROSSIAN WORKERS KNOW YOU WILL AS AN OLD MILITANT IN AMERICAN LABOUR MOVEMENT.

TOMSKY PRESIDENT ALL RUSSIAN CENTRAL COUNCIL TRADE UNIONS
ANDREYEV PRESIDENT CENTRAL COUNCIL RAILWAY UNION

Telegram, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Mikhail Pavlovich Tomsky (1880-1936) was a member of the central committee of the Communist party and of the Politburo and from 1922 to 1929 was chairman of the central committee of trade unions. Implicated in the "Rightist Opposition" trials in 1936, Tomsky was reported to have committed suicide.

2. Andrey Andreyevich Andreyev (1895-1971) joined the Bolshevik movement in 1914, participated in the 1917 revolution, and for more than thirty years held key positions in the Soviet government as a close ally of Joseph Stalin. He was a member of the Communist party central committee, a member of the Politburo, and commissar of agriculture during World War II. Andreyev survived the post-Stalin reorganization of the Soviet regime as a member of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet.

Albert F. Coyle[1] to EVD

April 10, 1923
Cleveland, Ohio

Dear Mr. Debs:

We have not forgotten that you contributed an article to the ENGINEERS JOURNAL a few months ago on "How Morse Got Out of Jail."[2] We wrote you expressing our appreciation of this service at that time. We want to show our further regard by sending you the JOURNAL regularly without charge.

The contributors to the Journal for the past year constitute the outstanding progressive leaders of American thought and action. Just glance over the April Journal[3] which you have just received, and I believe you will agree with me that no other monthly magazine in the country is placing before the public the opinions of so many distinguished national leaders as is the JOURNAL.

We want you to feel at home in the fellowship of the JOURNAL family. Especially we seek your cooperation in making the JOURNAL a most intelligent and constructive organ of social progress. Please feel free to write us at any time concerning matters of public interest which you feel we ought to lay before our readers.

With best wishes,

Faithfully yours,
Albert F. Coyle
Acting Editor.

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Albert F. Coyle served as acting editor of the *Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers Magazine* from March 1922 to August 1927, during which time he also served as secretary of the All American Cooperative Commission, which was housed in the BLE building in Cleveland. Coyle wrote regularly, on Mexico, China, and Mexican-American affairs for the socialist *New Leader* and *American Appeal.*

2. As noted, Debs's article on Charles W. Morse appeared in the July 1922 issue of the *Locomotive Engineers Journal.*

3. The April 1923 issue of the *Locomotive Engineers Journal,* devoted to the theme "Peace or Ruin—Which?" carried articles by William Borah, Tom Moore, Jean Longuet, and others.

EVD to M. Tomsky and A. Andreyev

April 14, 1923
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Comrades:

The cablegram from you under date of the 5th. inst. was received here in my absence and I beg now to acknowledge its receipt and to thank you warmly and through you the organizations you represent for the cordial invitation you extend to me to visit Soviet Russia, a pleasure I have been promising myself for some time but have been unable to realize on account of my health and affairs here at home, long neglected on account of my imprisonment, which will require my attention for some time to come. But I hope at a later time when the circumstances are more favorable to accept the very kind invitation you extend and to visit our comrades in Russia and bear witness to the brave struggle they are making and the noble efforts they are putting forth to establish a true working-class Republic within their own borders and at the same time set an illuminating and inspiring example of proletarian achievement to the whole world. I have been with you, dear comrades, with all my heart since the beginning of your epoch-making Revolution and I shall be with you, I trust, when you finally celebrate its triumphant and glorious consummation. Please let me thank you heartily for your kind and appreciative words and accept for yourselves the assurance of my fraternal affection and esteem and convey the same to all the comrades and fellow-workers you so loyally represent.

Please do me the kindness also to present my sincere regards and warmest wishes to Comrades Lenin, Trotzsky and other comrades who are standing so staunchly for the Soviet Republic against a hostile capitalist world, and believe me always,

Yours faithfully,
[Eugene V. Debs]

TLc, InTI, Debs Collection.

EVD to Arthur Henderson[1]

April 16, 1923
Chicago, Illinois

My dear Comrade:

Your cablegram[2] has just been placed in my hands by National Secretary Branstetter and I am taking pleasure in enclosing a brief

May Day greeting[3] as requested which I hope will reach you in time. We are in the midst of a campaign of re-organization here and meeting with the most gratifying results. We shall soon have a more powerful Socialist Party than we ever had before in these states. We are more than gratified to note the splendid progress you are making in England in overcoming your opposition and in the great work you are doing to place labor in power and to make the working class the rulers of Great Britain.

With all cordial greetings to yourself and comrades in which we all join, I remain

Yours fraternally
[Eugene V. Debs]

[enclosure]

GREETINGS FROM AMERICA

Your cablegram and I reached Chicago at about the same time and it is with real pleasure that I comply with your request. We have just concluded a most interesting municipal campaign here in which the vote cast for Socialism was more than doubled.[4] The war hysteria has now subsided to a considerable extent although we still have some fifty political prisoners serving sentences of twenty years and more for holding opinions adverse to the late international slaughter, a fact that disgraces the plutocratic United States Government before the world.

It is with special satisfaction that I advise our British comrades that the Socialist Party which was all but destroyed during the war is now rapidly reorganizing upon a more secure foundation and I feel justified in predicting that within a twelvemonth the party will be stronger and more efficiently organized in every way than ever before.

We have noted with deep interest and full appreciation the splendid progress made by the Socialist movement in Great Britain, especially since the recent election and the surprising increase in the Socialist representation in the House of Commons.[5] From now on Socialism is the one commanding issue before the people and whatever may be the result of the immediate contentions between Socialists and their adversaries it is certain that the final victory will be achieved in the not remote future and that England will soon be transformed into a Socialist commonwealth.

In behalf of the Socialists of America I beg to send cordial May Day greetings to our British comrades with the ardent hope that the

splendid efforts they are now putting forth in behalf of the working class may soon be crowned with complete victory.

Yours faithfully,
Eugene V. Debs

TLc, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Arthur Henderson (1863-1935) joined in the founding of the Labour party in England in 1906 and served as the party's secretary from 1911 to 1934. First elected to Parliament in 1903, Henderson served in Lloyd George's war cabinet and in the immediate postwar years was credited with greatly strengthening the Labour party in its drive for parliamentary control. In the governments of Ramsay MacDonald, Henderson served as home secretary and later as foreign secretary and was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1934.

2. Henderson's cablegram, dated April 13, 1923, asked Debs for a "250 words May Day message for Labour Magazine." InTI, Debs Collection.

3. Debs's "Greeting from America" was printed in *Socialist World,* April 1923.

4. In the Chicago mayoralty election on April 3, 1923, the Socialist party candidate, William A. Cunnea, received "forty-one thousand votes, almost double the amount credited to the Socialist candidate for mayor in any previous election." *Debs Magazine,* April 1923.

5. In the preceding six months the Conservative government in England had lost "five bye-elections in succession" to Labour party candidates. *New York Times,* April 11, 1923.

EVD to David Karsner

April 23, 1923
Chicago, Illinois

My dear David:

I was as much surprised as I was grieved upon receiving your note announcing your retirement from The Call.[1] I had hoped that under your editorial management and control harmony would ensue and you comrades would be able to work together to build up the Call and make it what it ought to be in the present very needful situation. I am not going to write you at length for I am just passing through and have but a brief hour here. There is much I would like to say but I shall have to put it off until I can get your ear and that will probably not be until I reach New York.[2] You know that I am always deeply interested in every move you make and in everything that concerns you and upon your leaving The Call I can only repeat the lines of the Eastern prayer:

"Wherever you stay, wherever you go,
May the beautiful palms of Allah grow."

With love to you as always and hoping that a thousand prosperities may attend you in whatever you undertake, I am as ever

Yours faithfully,
Eugene V. Debs

Love, dear David!

TLS, NN Kars.

1. As noted, Karsner had been appointed manager-editor of the *Call* in early March 1923. Following the publication of Karsner's "The Passing of the Socialist Party" in the June 1924 issue of *Current History*, James Oneal attacked Karsner as "A Sour Deserter" (*Call*, June 7, 1924) who had been "an interim appointee to fill in a gap, as everybody connected with the Call knew at the time."

2. Debs was scheduled to give several speeches in the East during May 1923. Meetings and rallies were set for New York City between May 22 and 25. *Socialist World*, April 1923.

Arthur Henderson to EVD

May 3, 1923
London, England

My dear Debs,

It is extremely kind of you to send me such a very acceptable and useful greeting from America to be used during our May Day celebrations, and I am sure that wherever it was read it was received with great acclamation by the supporters of our Movement.

May I take this opportunity of expressing the hope that you are now recovering from your long incarceration, and have yet many years to spend on behalf of the workers whose cause you have so much at heart.

Believe me,
Yours sincerely,
Arthur Henderson

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

EVD to Theodore Debs

May 14, [1923]
Newark, New Jersey

My dear old Pard:

Wonderful demonstration here yesterday. The great Colisseum packed to the doors & the streets outside choked with thousands. I

had to address the giant overflow outside before I made my speech in the house. In the evening we held a great membership meeting. The meeting *netted* over & above all expenses more than $1700.00. Kirkpatrick,[1] Lena Morrow Lewis, the Goebels[2] & many others send you their love. Sperry[3] came to see me here—sends you his love. Everybody here is jubilant—Weather fine & I'm chipper as a young game-cock.

Love & kisses to you & Gertrude

Gene

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. George Kirkpatrick.
2. George H. and Mary Margaret Goebel, who lived in Newark.
3. Marvin Gates Sperry, national commander of the Private Soldiers and Sailors Legion, a veterans' organization that had supported the efforts to secure Debs's release from prison. In "Sperry Defends Debs" (*Washington Post,* August 1, 1921), Sperry denounced the American Legion for its opposition to Debs's release and argued that the Legion did not "represent the sentiments of the great mass of ex-service men and women in its deliberately malicious and misleading statements."

EVD to Theodore Debs

May 17, [1923]
Detroit, Michigan

My dear old Pard,

Your good letter here read with joy. The cheer in it is the very nectar of life to me. Glad everything is O.K. at home. I'm taking best of care of & feeling better & stronger every day. I get lots of rest & the weather is fine & I'll come home stronger than when I left. I make but 8 dates in all of June so dont worry. After that I make but 1 speech and that's 4th of July & then I'm through & we'll go fishing. My arms are about you. Love & kisses to Gertrude.

Your old pal
Gene

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

EVD to Ralph Chaplin

August 6, 1923
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Ralph:

A thousand thanks for the precious little volume[1] containing your poetic heart-beats and for the loving inscription which gives it priceless value. I have been away or this note would have reached you sooner. I was made happy by your release[2] but I shall not be at peace until all the rest are out. That wonderfully loyal wife and boy of yours were in my heart through all the days and nights you were in hell.

With love to you all I am always,

Yours faithfully,
Eugene V. Debs

TLS, MiU, Labadie Collection.

1. Probably Chaplin's collection of prison poems, *Bars and Shadows.*

2. President Harding commuted the sentences of Chaplin and twenty-six other IWW prisoners on June 20, 1923. *New York Times,* June 21, 1923.

Joseph Manley[1] to EVD

August 14, 1923
Chicago, Illinois

EUGENE V DEBS

BY ACTION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF THE FEDERATED FARMER LABOR PARTY I AM INSTRUCTED TO REQUEST THAT YOU MEET A COMMITTEE ON IMPORTANT MATTER STOP THE COMMITTEE IS COMPOSED OF ALEXANDER HOWAT WILLIAM Z FOSTER AND OTTO WANGERIN[2] SECRETARY NATIONAL RAILROAD AMALGAMATION COMMITTEE STOP THE COMMITTEE CAN MEET YOU ANY TIME BETWEEN AUGUST TWENTY SEVENTH AND AUGUST THIRTIETH[3] INCLUSIVE ANY PLACE YOU WISH STOP PLEASE ANSWER BY WIRE COLLECT

JOSEPH MANLEY
SECRETARY
800 NORTH CLARK ST

Telegram, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Joseph Manley was a member of the Bridge and Structural Iron Workers Union and one of the organizers of the 1919 steel strike. A member of the Workers party,

Manley was head of the Eastern District of the Trade Union Educational League and was named secretary of the Federated Farmer-Labor party, a short-lived, Communist-dominated breakaway party formed in July 1923 at the Farmer-Labor party convention in Chicago. *Worker,* November 25, 1922; July 21, 1923.

2. Otto Wangerin was acting state secretary of the Socialist party in Minnesota in 1918, when he was convicted and sentenced to fifteen years' imprisonment for refusing to register for the draft. He was released from prison in 1922. *International Socialist Review,* January 1918; *New York Times,* January 8, 1918.

3. The *Worker,* September 15, 1923, described "the promising and fruitful hours" spent by Debs, Foster, Howat, and Wangerin in a "recent conference" on August 28, 1923, in Terre Haute. The meeting, the *Worker* reported, was held to "discuss ways and means of bringing about a united front of the trade unions, the Communists, and the Socialists in the 1924 campaign."

William Z. Foster to EVD

August 29, 1923
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Comrade Debs:—

In accordance with our talk of yesterday,[1] I am herewith extending you an official invitation to attend the Second General Conference of the Trade Union Educational League,[2] which will be held at 2733 Hirsch Blvd., Chicago, beginning 9:00 a.m. Sept. 1st, and continuing until the evening of Sept. 2nd. There will be many leading revolutionary militants from all over the United States and Canada present at the Conference. They will be very glad to get a message from a veteran like yourself. I trust that you will surely be able to pay us at least a short visit during the Conference. In the event that it is impossible for you to come, we would very much appreciate a telegram of greeting from you.[3]

With best wishes, I am,

Fraternally yours,
Wm Z Foster

P.S. I see that the men who were responsible for shooting into that meeting hall[4] crowded with women and even children, are now blaming the matter on me saying that I framed-up. It seems there is no limit to which they will not go.

WZF

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. As noted, Foster, Howat, and Wangerin met with Debs in Terre Haute on August 28, 1923.

2. In "Trade Union Educational League" (*Worker,* March 4, 1922), the organization's goal was described as "uniting the radical forces in the American labor movement" by organizing "all trade unionists who are willing to work for industrial unionism" and those who rejected "the outworn forms of craft unionism." The league was viewed by most AFL leaders as a "dual union" movement, a "menace" that would "destroy the unions' foundations of democracy and discipline." *New York Call,* August 25, 1923.

3. Debs's greeting to the league conference has not been found, but in Foster's letter to Debs of September 5, 1923, Foster recalled that "it is but a couple of days ago since you sent a telegram of greeting" to the conference.

4. During a Foster speech at Carmen's Hall in Chicago on August 27, 1923, "three shots were fired at the speaker by unknown gunmen." Foster blamed officers of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU), seven of whose members had been expelled for joining the league, and Morris Sigman, president of the Garment Workers' Union, declared that "the bullets fired were blank cartridges or were intentionally sent wide of their mark" and that "Foster had the shots fired at him in order that he might create publicity and sympathy for himself." *New York Call,* August 31, 1923.

Frank Rinney[1] to EVD

September 3, 1923
Madison, Wisconsin

Dear Comrade Debs:

I suppose your body guards or guardians will have a fit if you get this letter, as when you was in Chicago in July I ask about you and was informed by the State Sec'y[2] that you could not be seen by any body. I have tried to reach you several times with a program that has merit and it only takes a little common sence to see it. J.M. Barnes[3] for a number of years Nat, Sec, of the Socialist Party thought the Nat, Exe, Committee should hear about the plan I propose and spoke to some of them requesting that they give me a hearing, and requested me to appear befor them, which I did. They were so busy desecting their corps that they could not spare the time for any thing that was alive. I set there for around an hour and not one favorable report was made on the progress of the Socialist Party, it seemed to be chaos every place. You seemed to be the only asset they had, but while the socialist would come in crowds to hear you, and out of their loyality to you dig up money at your meetings, and in a sence relieve the destress of the job holders, it was regretted that even you could not get them to come back into the party. If we ever get what the real socialist stand for it will be in spite of the Socialist Party as it is to day. And when one thinks of what you could do if you had any support,

and a system of organizing in harmony with what real socialist want. I know that you are not an organizer, but you have the influence, and if you demand that the Party adopt the Merit System of Organizing, and a Service Bureau to render service to the members on the way, you will develop men out of the ranks to run the machine. You cannot run the machinery of state with votes as the S.P. want to do, nor can you run it with a mob as the I.W.W. want to do. But you must have trained men, who are developed from the ranks on their merit. How can you run a State, or a Nation, with men that cannot co-operate intelligently in a township or a county. If you think this is a dream, try to find some socialist that has the courage to meet me before any mass meeting of socialist and oppose the Merit System of Organizing, or the Service Bureau plan of co-operation.

With best wishes for your good health and future success I am.

Fraternaly yours,
Frank Rinney

TLS, NcD, Socialist Party Papers.

1. Frank Rinney has not been found in the Madison, Wisconsin, city or telephone directories. His letter to Debs is written on the letterhead of the Wisconsin Nonpartisan League.
2. William R. Snow.
3. J. Mahlon Barnes.

William Z. Foster to EVD

September 5, 1923
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Comrade Debs:—

You will find enclosed herewith a clipping taken from the Chicago Daily News[1] of September 5th and dealing with a statement issued by you. As you will note, this article, directly citing the committee that visited you, undertakes to align you definitely against the left-wing in the needle trades and in support of the present campaign of expulsion of revolutionaries[2] now being carried on by the right-wing officialdom in that industry.

I feel that there must be some mistake about this matter. Either the newspaper man or the committee are undertaking to put you in a false light. It is only a few months ago since you wrote an article for THE LABOR HERALD[3] warmly endorsing the Trade Union Educational League. Also, it is but a couple of days ago since you

sent a telegram of greeting to the League's General Conference. In the face of this, I cannot believe that you have had any such change of opinion as this article tries to make one believe. It is true that your statement does not condemn our movement, but the committee is cited as saying that you expressed hearty disapproval of our program and endorsed the present regime in the Garment Workers' Union, which presumably includes the campaign of expulsion. To-day, a newspaper man called me up to make a statement regarding the enclosed article, which I refused to do pending receipt of some word from you on the matter.

The state of affairs in Sigman's[4] organization is now a desperate one. The reactionary officials, who oppose industrial unionism, Soviet Russia, and many other principles long advocated by you, are trying to expel bodily the left-wing which they cannot meet in fair argument. To this end, they are even employing gunmen. We stand ready to prove not only that there was a real shooting affair in the Carmen's Hall the day before I visited you, but also to tell the name of the man who did it,[5] a former official of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union. Their attempt to lie out of this affair is one of the most brazen things I have ever heard of. Now they are trying to twist your statement around to support their shameless program of expulsion and disruption. I am convinced that a revolutionist of your standing will not allow yourself to be so misused. Will you not kindly drop me a letter on this matter? It is of the utmost importance.

With best wishes and hoping to hear from you shortly, I remain,

Fraternally yours,
Wm Z. Foster

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. In a story, "Debs Quits Foster for Dividing Union," the *Daily News* (September 5, 1923) reported that a committee had visited Debs while Debs was in Chicago on September 2 preparing for a western speaking trip and had secured Debs's "hearty disapproval of the Foster program" and his "endorsement of the present regime of the International Ladies Garment Workers." The committee was composed of Otto Branstetter; Bertha Hale White; Samuel Kramer, editor of the Chicago *Jewish Daily Forward;* Abraham Tuvim; and Meyer Perlstein of the ILGWU.

2. As noted, the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union had expelled seven of its members for joining and promoting the TUEL program.

3. In the April 1923 issue of the TUEL paper, *Labor Herald,* Debs wrote that the league was "under the direction and inspiration of William Z. Foster . . . the one rightly directed movement for the industrial unification of the American workers. I thoroughly approve of its plan and its methods." *Miami Valley Socialist,* March 30, 1923.

4. Morris Sigman (1881-1931) was born in Russia, came to the United States in 1903, and immediately entered into the union activities of the New York garment industry. He served as secretary-treasurer and vice-president of the International

Ladies' Garment Workers' Union and, in February 1923, became general president of the union, a post he held until 1928, when poor health forced him to resign. As vice-president (1920-22) and president of the ILGWU, Sigman led the successful fight against the dual unionism of the league, but the fight, including the expulsion of ILGWA members, resulted in severe losses in membership.

5. A long account of the shooting affair in the *Worker* of September 8, 1923, does not identify the gunmen responsible for "the attempted assassination of William Z. Foster."

EVD to Theodore Debs

[September 10, 1923?]
Seattle, Washington[1]

My dear old Pal, Monday A.M. 6 O'Clock

You'll see I'm up with the lark. No words could possibly describe yesterday's tremendous demonstration here. The great Arena filled with the cheering thousands presented a scene never to be forgotten. The whole country up here is afire with enthusiasm. Our day has come once more & the people are with us in overwhelming numbers. The stage was covered with flowers & my rooms are lined with them. Hundreds of callers here at hotel—all sorts & conditions of people to pay their respects and express their sympathy. Frank Holl & his wife & many others send love to you & Gertrude. Have a letter from Maynard Shipley & shall see him & his wife. Feeling finer & stronger every day. Hope you & Gertrude are in good tune

Love with all my heart!

Your old pard
Gene

Enclosed is a list of the reception committee here. The band enclosed they wore about their arms—hundreds of them, men, women & children

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Beginning on September 4, 1923, Debs began a month-long western tour that took him to Montana, Washington, Oregon, California, Utah, and Idaho. *Socialist World*, August 1923.

EVD to Theodore Debs

[September 11, 1923]
Everett, Washington

My sweet old Pard, Tuesday 11th

The meeting here last night was wonderful—the theater crowded to the doors, and I never addressed a more beautiful, sympathetic and enthusiastic audience, and this in Everett where they massacred a number of union men who came here by boat from Seattle six years ago and drove the rest from the city and swore there should never be another socialist meeting in Everett. But ah, there's been a wonderful change & now the people understand in part at least and are with us, and they dare not lay their dirty, cowardly hands on us. They (the A.L. & C. of C.)[1] were going to stop the meeting here—but they didn't. Then they said if I said anything "radical" they would stop me and disperse the meeting but by God, they changed their minds. I cut loose and gave them hell from start to finish & ripped their rotten system wide open but they knew better than to monkey with me or try any rough stuff on that meeting, and it is well they did for if they had tried to pull anything off their hides would be on exhibition this morning. I'm feeling very *hostile* & if you were within landing distance I'd treat you to the most artistic whaling ever administered to a mortal pelt.

I hope you and Gertrude are well and chipper as chipmunks. It's a beautiful morning—cool and bracing and I'm feeling like a young panther at a cake-walk.

With a heart full of love to you & Gertrude.

Your old pard forever
Gene

This {tour}[2] is like a tidal wave sneeking over the Northwest & they are lining up in the party in a way to warm the cockles of your heart.

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. American Legion and Chamber of Commerce.
2. A detailed account of Debs's tour is in *Socialist World*, September 1923.

EVD to William Z. Foster

September 12, 1923
Seattle, Washington

Dear Comrade Foster:

Your telegram of the 5th inst directed to me at Butte and your letter of the same date, addressed to me here, reached me promptly, and I should have answered at once, but for the fact that I was kept so fully occupied I {could not possibly} answer the many demands upon my time. Under other circumstances, you would have heard from me more promptly.

I have carefully read both the telegram and letter, the latter containing the enclosure of a clipping from the Chicago News of the same date. You surmised correctly that certain statements in the News story were unauthorized and untrue. How these statements came to be made I am at a loss to understand. I cannot believe that any of our people were guilty of such gross misrepresentation.

At the time I met with the Committee of the Ladies' Garment Workers, and heard their story and their statements, both of which were at such palpable variance with what you told me, I expressed the wish that they and you might be brought face to face to ascertain the real truth of the situation and if I had not been obliged to leave there that night, I should certainly have endeavored to effect such a meeting.

I told the Committee frankly that I had some time ago written an article approving the educational work of your League and the circumstances under which the article was written, having special reference to the great bulk of reaction that prevails in the Trade Union movement and that must be overcome before any substantial progress could be made along the right lines.

Now, the claim they make and insist upon is that the members of your League, who were expelled, were not put out of the organization because of any "educational" work they were doing, but because they were bent upon disrupting and destroying the Union in the fanatical attempt to convert it at once, summarily, into a communist organization. The Committee stated emphatically that these members took no interest whatever in the legitimate affairs of the Union; that they took no part in picketing or in supporting a strike, or advancing the interests of the organization; that they were simply determined to use their membership as a means of turning the Union into the Communist movement. According to the statements made to me by the Committee in question, the expelled members simply made a nuisance of them-

selves by their persistent efforts to divide the membership, to create strife and dissension, and to inevitably force in time the destruction of the Union. They claimed that the Trade Union Educational League was in effect a rival organization, in spite of the declaration of the League that it was opposed to dual organization. They insisted that the demands made by the two organizations upon a member were in direct conflict, and that it was impossible for him to bear allegiance to both.

Now, of course, I knew nothing about the character or conduct of the expelled members, nor about the nature of their activities in the Union of garment workers, and I said nothing that could possibly be construed into a justification of their expulsion or of the policy of the organization in dealing with the members of the League. I was in no position to express intelligent judgment in the matter, and I certainly did not do so. Upon this point, I think I ought to say to you that if the members who were expelled were like some communists and some members of the Workers' Party, happily in the minority, I know, I am not surprised to hear that they made themselves offensive by their methods and the spirit in which they were employed, and that they aroused the opposition of the great majority of the members, and instead of "educating" them by rational means, simply brought about their own expulsion. The same thing will happen again, and more repeatedly, I fear, in the future, under the same circumstances. I say this to you but I did not say it to the Committee.

I made but a very brief statement as to the vital issue involved in the case and to that I attached my signature. By that statement I stand. In it there is nothing to justify, in the remotest degree, the false statements which appear in the News story. I decline to be held responsible for what newspapers publish about me, especially in such a case as this when a capitalist newspaper has a special incentive in creating division and ill-feeling in the ranks of labor.

Now, in closing let me say that I would like to have this matter adjusted before greater harm is done and before further disaster follows, as much as anyone possibly can, and to this end I think you and your associates, represented by a proper committee, of which you should certainly be a member, should meet a committee of the officials of the union, face each other, and in a decent spirit try to arrive at an understanding. I would like very much to be present at such a

conference to know the truth about the situation concerning which only the most conflicting reports have come to me.

With greetings and all good wishes to you, I remain,

Yours Fraternally,
[Eugene V. Debs]

TLc, InTI, Debs Collection.

EVD to Theodore Debs

September 13, [1923]
Tacoma, Washington

My dear old Pard,

If I'm not mistaken this is the anniversary of Dandy and Daisy's wedding day.[1] God bless their sweet and precious memory! It will bloom perennial in our hearts forever. We will have a great meeting here to-night and leave on the midnight train for Portland. The damn fools at Long Beach Cal (A.L. & C of C.) cancelled the meeting there as you know & now Long Beach people want a date more than ever & half a dozen other points want the date. We have given it to Santa Rosa where Burbank[2] is & I'll get to see him. The Long Beach "patriots" telegraphed it all over the country that they had cancelled my date to hurt me & only helped me. All the T.H. papers published the dispatch. They eagerly seize upon that sort of stuff about me as eagerly as buzzards light upon carrion {but} the nasty little sheets have never a decent thing said about me, & it's just right for I wouldn't have any favor at their dirty hands. The only trouble we are having is that the houses are too small to hold the enormous crowds for which our thanks are due in no small measure to the A.L. & the C. of C. the Wall st. twins & I tell them so. I'm going to tear the hides off the plutes in California & their outrageous despotism if I go to jail for it. The keepers of Tom Mooney, the lickspittle judges & rotten courts & politicians. I'm going to burn them alive & tell them they have made California stink to the skies, & that some day the whirlwind they are sowing will sweep them into red hell where they belong. We'll have tremendous meetings at L.A. & S.F.[3] & I'll give them the straight gospel smoking hot—feeling fine as the Prairieton Prince & hope you & Gertrude are chipper as humming birds.

Love & kisses & a "short-arm" swish in the beak. A la Hammerstein! Wow!!

Gene

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Debs's parents were married on September 13, 1849.

2. Luther Burbank (1849-1926) was a world-famous plant breeder who conducted many of his experiments on new varieties of fruits, flowers, vegetables, grains, and grasses at his home in Santa Rosa, California. Burbank died in April 1926, and at the time of Debs's death in October of that year his widow, Elizabeth Burbank, sent condolences to Katherine Debs, noting that "I know too that the joy and privilege of companionship with one who has striven for truth and right is a beautiful compensation." InTI, Debs Collection.

3. Debs spoke in San Francisco on September 18, Santa Rosa on September 21, and Los Angeles on September 23. He "visited Tom Mooney in San Quentin" while he was in San Francisco. *Socialist World,* August and September 1923.

EVD to Theodore Debs

[September 14, 1923]
Portland, Oregon

My dear old Pard:

Just arrived from Tacoma—a most wonderful meeting there. The Central Labor Union & the communists did all they could against the meeting & that helped a lot to make it a tremendous success. (Here the meeting is under the auspices of the Central Labor Union.) The theatre at Tacoma was crowded to the doors—all the boxes & stage filled, and such an ovation, such enthusiasm—and believe me, I made a speech that stirred the natives. A prominent citizen at the close said he had heard every great American orator but that my speech was the greatest oration he had ever heard in all his life. Hundreds came to the hotel after the lecture & my rooms were crowded till I left & flowers in such abundance that there was room for no more. Lucile Mint, dear soul, was there & supremely happy. She loves you to worship & wished me to tell you so, & to send you & Gertrude her loving remembrances.

One of the most touching tributes ever paid me in all my life was the serenade of a band of orphans, 18 in number, from 6 to 14 years of age. There is an institution near here privately conducted by a man & his wife, beautiful souls, & they take in orphans & raise them & make musicians of them all. This band of 18 tots, half boys & half girls, came early yesterday in their touring car with a great Debs sign

on each side—they played on the street corners to advertise my meeting & then came to hotel & serenaded me. Great crowds watched & applauded & it was certainly a touching scene. We gave them a banquet in the evening & you should have seen how happy they were.

Weather glorious & I'm in Prairieton Tune.

All's well here. Big Local started in Tacoma last night.

Love & Kisses
Gene

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

Algernon Lee to EVD

September 16, 1923
New York City

Dear Eugene Debs:—

My wife and I can never forget the message of love and all too precious praise which you sent for my fiftieth birthday.[1] I shall try to merit better in the future than in the past your good words and that of other dear comrades. You help to keep us all young by the eternal youth of your heart. One of the memorable days of my life was when I first heard you speak—in the old Lyceum Theater in Minneapolis—three or four days before you went into Woodstock Jail. It took me more than a year after that to find my way into the Socialist movement; but although you did not call yourself a Socialist that night, and probably did not use the word, you helped me on the way. I realized then, as I never had before, that what we must have was not merely an intellectual understanding of economic and political questions, but a conscious and self reliant movement of the working class—and that, after all, is the alpha and omega of Socialism. It was six years after that before I saw you again and perhaps a dozen before we ever shook hands, but I already knew you. Our 'Gene keeps growing, but his face has never turned from the dawn it then looked to—he grows, and is yet the same true, brave, loving 'Gene.

Ever proudly your comrade
Algernon Lee

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Lee was born on September 15, 1873. Debs's message was read at the testimonial dinner honoring Lee in New York City. *New York Call,* September 16, 1923.

William Z. Foster to EVD

September 22, 1923
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Comrade Debs:—

Your letter of Sept. 12th, duly received. Please pardon delay in answering it, as I have been out on the road for the past two weeks. I am very glad to note that you do not support the interpretation placed upon your statement by the capitalist press and others.

First, let me deal with the closing paragraph of your letter, in which you propose the formation of a conference at which the matter in dispute in the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union can be threshed out by representatives of the union and of the League, and at which conference you should be present. I think this is a very practical proposal. Our National Committee accepts it wholeheartedly and will be glad to participate in such a meeting at the earliest date. Like yourself, we believe that a stop should be put to this matter before further harm is done. It is very probable that a round-table talk would be productive of good results. We await your further pleasure in this matter. So far as we are concerned, you have the authority to go ahead with the arrangement of the proposed conference. May we hope, however, that it will take place in Chicago, so that there will not be too much expense involved.

I am herewith sending you copy of a mimeographed statement apparently sent out by Abraham Tuvim[1] dealing with this general matter. I think he makes the most unfair use of your statement. The burden of his argument is that we had been making wrong use of your name in this controversy and that your statement was a repudiation of us. This is clearly the intent of the statement enclosed, as well as of the press stories given out. And this is the impression that has been developed all over the country. I wish to protest most emphatically against such charges as Tuvim here makes. The statement that we used the Terre Haute conference "to create further division in the needle trades" is a deliberate fabrication on someone's part. The fact of the matter is that I made no reference to what transpired at that conference either publicly or privately, except to Secretary Manley of the Federated Farmer-Labor Party. There was absolutely no story given out to the press by me on the matter. Representatives of many papers, including those of the Workers' Party, asked me for a story. But to all of them I replied that it had been agreed at the conference that you would issue whatever statements that were to be given publicity, and that you had issued one such statement. Not a

word have I spoken on the matter in public, nor a line have I written on it. As for The Worker, it carried the story that originated in the New York Call.[2] Not a line did it get from me or any other member of our committee. Even under the deluge of unfavorable publicity that came after the Chicago committee visited you, I said not a word to the press, even though the temptation was great. To all inquiries regarding my interpretation of your statement, I replied simply that I had written to you about the matter. I refused absolutely to comment on it. I relied upon your eventually straightening the matter out. My attitude in respect to the use of your name in this matter of the statement also holds true for this whole controversy. I have religiously refrained from drawing you into it. I believe that in fairness to me and those associated with me, that this point of the use of your name in this needle trades situation should be cleared up at the proposed conference suggested by you. I am not disposed to allow such statements to stand unchallenged as this of Tuvim's.

I think you will agree that we have been put in rather a false light by the statements appearing in the capitalist press. We have had absolutely no come-back on the proposition, having religiously refrained from making any reply until we could hear from you. Much publicity has been given this false interpretation of your statement and wide use of it has been made, to our disadvantage, in the needle trades. Therefore, may we request the right to publish this latest letter of yours, without any comment whatsoever or interpretation of our own? This would put your attitude clearly before the rank and file, without any biased trimmings. Or, if you think it advisable to run my letter also along with yours, that could be done. Kindly advise us on this matter.

Inasmuch as you propose a conference, which I believe will furnish a way to removing a great deal of the bitterness in the needle trades, I shall not here go into all the points raised in your letter, as most of them would be considered by such a conference. But, I do feel called upon to defend the character of the members expelled in Chicago. Without exception, they are old time members in the union, men and women who have proven their sincerity in the work of the organization. For example, there is Davidson,[3] who was secretary of the Joint Board in Chicago. He has belonged to the union for 15 years and has held many positions of trust. He it was who was giving Perlstein[4] the most active support in the carrying out of the organization campaign. Then there is Dora Lipshitz,[5] who has also been a loyal member, through all the ups and downs of the union for fourteen years. To expel such members off-hand is out of the question, likewise to condemn them as disrupters. The terrific resistance that Sigman and

Perlstein are encountering throughout the I.L.G.W. proves this conclusively. In fact they have been compelled very largely to retreat from their announced policy of wholesale expulsions. They see clearly that to go through with it would mean the death of the organization.

The situation is a critical one, nevertheless, and I believe that all of us having an influence with either group should make an effort to bring about harmony. I think the conference proposed by you will be helpful to that end, and we accept the proposal wholeheartedly.

Hoping to hear from you later on this matter, and with best wishes, I remain,

Fraternally yours,
Wm Z Foster

P.S. Please return statement by Tuvim.

WZF

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Tuvim's statement (*Call*, September 6, 1923) quoted Debs as saying, "I am a Socialist and, as such, a member of the Socialist Party and no other . . . I am opposed to any attempt to divide the workers . . . and reduce them to a state of impotency under any pretense whatsoever."

2. Debs's statement (*Call*, August 29, 1923) after his meeting with Foster, Howat, and Wangerin in Terre Haute noted that the group "considered ways and means to carry forward more effectively the work of education so necessary to the enlightened self-interest of the workers" but did not mention the TUEL or the TUEL-ILGWU conflict.

3. Israel Davidson is listed in the Chicago city directory for 1923 as secretary of the Joint Council of the Ladies' Garment Workers' Union.

4. Meyer Perlstein (1884-1958) was born in Russia, came to the United States in 1906, and joined the ILGWU soon thereafter. He became a vice-president of the union in 1916, headed its Cleveland local from 1918 to 1923, and was then transferred to Chicago, where he led the union's fight against the TUEL. Perlstein left the ILGWU in 1925 but returned in 1934 and served as director of its Southwestern District (St. Louis) until his death.

5. Lipshitz is listed as one of the sponsors of Foster's speech at Carmen's Hall in Chicago at the time of the shooting affair there. *Worker*, September 8, 1923.

Bartolomeo Vanzetti[1] to EVD

September 29, 1923
Charlestown, Massachusetts

Dear Comrade E. Debs:—

It is long time, since your unforgettable visit to me,[2] that I am wishing to write to you.

I have told to one of the noblest women of this nation that I am ashamed to have been unable to speak to you; and she answered "Do not whorry of it, E. Debs understan it." And, as prove, she told me a similar case in the life of her mother, who has understood and appreciated the silence of a friend.

I realize that you have understood me—but, nevertheless I wished, I wish to express to you my gratitude, my respect and my love.

As you know, I belong to the extreme anarchistic school—but maybe you ignore the admiration and affection that we, Italian anarchists, have for you—or, rather, that you won from us.

You and Lucy Parson[3] are the two American for whose personal acquaintance I have longed for many years. Now I have the pleasure to know both of you.

Once, when living in Farrel P.[4] I have heard that you would have come to speak in Charlestown, O. All the Italian anarchists of the neighbourhood were there, waiting for you. But a telegram came, and told your impossibility to reach the city. So I have had to wait many years before to see you. And I must confess that when I saw you I went near to cry.

You and I belong to different schools of socialism—but you are my teacher.

I do not vote, but I would trust unto you the sacrest and dearest things of the life.

Because you have superated this age, arose above the narrow limits of parties and of sects, and masterly preach by exemples.

I am firmly convinced that the results of the human convivence: miseries, darkness and death, or health, light, happiness and life, are more determined by the qualities and the deeds of the individuals than by parties' and sets' programs and creeds. And I am positive that if a minority would follow your {practical} example the reality of the to-morrow would be above the dreams of many dreamers.

I expect to be bring in Court next Monday; also, have some letters to be wrote; and wish to write an article before to-morrow night: for these reasons I must close this letter, praying you to exscuse my poor English and to accept my sincere sentiments.[5]

Your, with great heart,
Bartolomeo V[anzetti]

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Bartolomeo Vanzetti (1888-1927), a fish peddler, and Nicola Sacco (1891-1927), a skilled shoe worker, were Italian immigrants who were arrested on May 5, 1920, for a payroll robbery and murder in South Braintree, Massachusetts. A jury, sitting under Judge Webster Thayer, found the men guilty on July 14, 1921. During the

following six years, complex legal motions relating to old and new evidence and to the conduct of the trial were argued before Thayer, the Massachusetts Supreme Court, and a special advisory commission appointed by the governor of Massachusetts and the Sacco-Vanzetti case became an international cause célèbre, but the two men were executed on August 23, 1927. Throughout their trials and appeals, Sacco and Vanzetti were believed by many Americans, including Debs, who wrote and spoke frequently on their case, to be the victims of persecution for their declared philosophical anarchism and their alien status. Debs, "The Sacco-Vanzetti Tragedy," *New York Call*, June 10, 1922.

2. In a speech in Boston on May 11, 1923, Debs said that he had "today visited Vanzetti at the State Prison and was thoroughly convinced that these men, Sacco and Vanzetti, were innocent of any crime." *St. Louis Labor*, May 19, 1923. Debs donated his five-dollar prison release check to the Sacco-Vanzetti Defense Fund. *Miami Valley Socialist*, January 20, 1922.

3. Lucy Parsons (1859-1942) was the widow of Albert Parsons, one of the men executed in Illinois in 1887 for his role in the Haymarket Massacre of May 1886. Throughout her life, in speeches and writing, including a biography of her husband, Parsons helped to keep alive the memory of the massacre and the trial that resulted in her husband's execution.

4. Pennsylvania.

5. In a letter to Virginia MacMechan, dated October 15, 1923, Vanzetti wrote that "I have received an answer letter from E. Debs, plus some writings and pictures." Marion Denman Frankfurter and Gardner Jackson, eds., *The Letters of Sacco and Vanzetti* (New York, 1928), 103.

EVD to William Z. Foster

October 8, 1923
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Comrade Foster:

Your communication of the 22nd ult. by registered mail reached me at Salt Lake City, but unfortunately I have been kept so busy ever since that I have had no earlier opportunity to make reply. I am sure you will understand from your own experience and make allowance accordingly.

I have read carefully the statement by Abraham Tuvim, enclosed by you which had already been brought to my attention. As stated by you, there were a number of misstatements in the article which appeared in the Chicago News in reference to my position and to what I had actually said in our interview and on other occasions in connection with the matter in question. I can only be held responsible for what has appeared over my own name in the matter in controversy and even this appears to be distorted by over zealous comrades on both sides in their eagerness to serve their respective ends for which

I cannot very severely criticise them. I am willing to believe that however they may have misinterpreted my utterances or meaning, they were actuated by no improper motives.

As to yourself and your position in reference to our interviews and other relations, and as to what you have said and written in connection therewith, I wish to say in all candor that you have been perfectly fair and honest and I can have no word of fault to find upon that score. Answering your inquiry as to the publication of my last letter to you, I would rather not have this done although there is really nothing in the letter I would object to having made public. But in the light of the misconstruction that has been placed upon other utterances of mine, I would prefer that publication be withheld at least for the present, although if you should insist upon it, I should in deference to your wishes, withdraw my objection.

In my previous letter, I called your attention to the statements of the respective sides engaged in the unfortunate controversy involving the expulsion of your members from the International Ladies' Garment Workers, and the utterly conflicting nature of {such} statements, and I informed you that I had suggested to the representatives of the Garment workers that the proper way to arrive at the truth and to a possible understanding would be to have the representatives of both sides meet and go over the situation in detail in presence of one another so that at least the essential facts of the situation might be brought out clearly as a basis for the possible adjustment of the difficulty which menaced the interests of the organized workers. To this proposition you have readily assented and you now invite me to participate in such a conference, preferably at Chicago, if it can be arranged, but unfortunately I cannot see my way clear to do so in my present situation. The work in which I am engaged on the road and the further work laid out for me during the coming weeks will tax my strength to the limit and beyond it, and I can see no immediate prospect of being able to render service in the capacity suggested by you, and which I appreciate fully implying as it does the confidence you have in me, glady as I would do so under other circumstances. If it were in my power to do anything to overcome this difficulty and to bring about an understanding and a better feeling, of course, I should deem it a privilege as well as a pleasure to do so, but I have already so much pressing upon me wherever I go that I find it impossible to make you any definite promise of assistance at this time. I am not at all my normal self nor have I been since I left prison, but I am doing the best I can with such strength as I have, hoping that if I can keep within the bounds of moderation, I may be able to recover myself more fully in time and be able to render more satis-

factory service to the cause. I am sure you, at least, will understand that if I cannot comply with your wishes in this instance, it is not due to any lack of sympathy and good will.

In closing, I venture to suggest that you make your proposition for a joint hearing direct to the officials of the International Ladies' Garment Workers, and if they agree to a conference, and it is possible for me to be in attendance, health and other considerations permitting, I shall, if desired, gladly render any service in reaching the desired end in my power.

Believe me, with all good wishes,

Yours fraternally,
[Eugene V. Debs]

TLc, InTI, Debs Collection.

William Z. Foster to EVD

October 25, 1923
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Comrade Debs:—

Following out the suggestion in your last letter, I have written to President Sigman of the International Ladies' Garment Workers, proposing a conference between his organization and ours relative to the present controversy over the League in his Union. Enclosed find a copy of the letter I sent him.[1]

So that there might not be any misunderstanding on the matter, I quoted verbatim what both you and I have written to each other directly upon the matter of the conference.

I trust that President Sigman will accept this offer. To go ahead as things are can only be very harmful.

With best wishes, I am,

Fraternally yours,
Wm Z Foster

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. In his letter to Morris Sigman, dated October 25, 1923, Foster quoted those parts of Debs's letters calling for a conference between the TUEL and the ILGWU and, "in conformity with the suggestion of Comrade Debs," invited Sigman to send representatives to such a conference at which "the general question of the controversy over our League shall be considered." In his autobiographical *Pages from a Worker's Life* (New York, 1939), Foster described Debs's role in the TUEL-ILGWU fight, noting

that "he promised to investigate but nothing came of the matter" (p. 218). Foster's letter to Sigman is in InTI, Debs Collection.

Theodore Debs to Otto Branstetter

October 27, 1923
Terre Haute, Indiana

Dear Comrade Branstetter:

This is precisely what will happen to Gene if there is a continuation of damphool booking, as has been done, regardless of what care he may receive while on the road. I was astounded, as were we all, when we learned that after a tour of six weeks that extended to the Pacific coast Gene was to be rushed East for another two weeks[1] with scarcely time enough between to change his linen. With such booking it is not surprising that comrades indignantly ask: "Is Gene a meal ticket for the national office?" Gene is a willing worker, has never known {a limit} in the use of his strength, but after his experience, covering a period of more than forty years, you must know there is an end to his physical endurance. This note requires no reply. It is a protest and a warning against asinine booking.

Fraternally yours,
[Theodore Debs]

TLc, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. The *Socialist World* (September 1923) announced that Debs would "be home for a brief rest on October 12th. Then to Lansing, Mich., Oct. 19; Toledo, Oct. 21st; Canton, Oct. 24 . . . [and] four meetings in New York and Brooklyn between October 26th and October 31st."

Otto Branstetter to Theodore Debs

October 30, 1923
New York City

THEODORE DEBS

GENE IS SHOWING EFFECTS OF OVERWORK IT IS MIDNIGHT AND HE HAS JUST PARTAKEN OF LIGHT LUNCH CONSISTING OF SIX HARD BOILED EGGS STOP WE HOPE HE WILL BE WELL ENOUGH TOMORROW TO TAKE SOME SUBSTANTIAL NOURISHMENT

BRANSTETTER

Telegram, NcD, Socialist Party Papers.

EVD to Carl Sandburg

November 6, 1923
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Carl:

Returning from the East after a series of most remarkable meetings including the final one at Cooper Union,[1] New York, I find your beautiful volume "Rootabaga Pigeons"[2] awaiting me for which I hasten to return my warmest thanks. It is a beautiful book, issued in a unique style befitting its contents and I shall have this to add to my collection of literary treasures and to serve as a precious and beloved companion to me always. No one but you could have produced this wonderful volume. It required your peculiar genius and your marvellous imagination to conceive and execute this strikingly original and appealing production.

I have read with deep interest and full appreciation the article about you in the Century.[3] You are growing amazingly and I can see you stepping from peak to peak with your soul aflame and your head among the stars. May the uttermost extent of your incomparable dreams all be triumphantly realized!

I have never for a day since leaving you and your beautiful wife and little household gods failed to think of you and return my thanks and blessings for the rest and comfort and inspiration that I found there. We are all devotees, you may be sure, of the House of Sandburg, and we are all joining, Mrs. Debs and Theodore and his wife and all of our family in love and salutation and a million good wishes. Count me always

Your loving friend and comrade,
Eugene V. Debs

TLS, InU, Lilly Library, Sandburg Papers.

1. Debs spoke at Cooper Union on October 30, 1923.
2. Sandburg's children's book, published in 1923.
3. In "Flame and Slag Carl Sandburg: Poet With Both Fists" (*Century*, September 1923), Carl Van Doren wrote that despite the "piles of slag" in Sandburg's work, it had a "strangely authentic beauty and grace and tenderness." A Sandburg short story, "Deep-Red Roses," appeared in the August 1923 issue of *Century.*

William Z. Foster to EVD

November 7, 1923
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Comrade Debs:—

Following out the suggestion in your letter of Sept. 12th, I wrote to President Sigman of the International Ladies' Garment Workers, proposing to him that there be a conference arranged between representatives of his organization and the Trade Union Educational League, to the end that the present critical situation in the needle trades, brought about by the expulsion and disfranchisement of many revolutionary workers, could be ended. I duly sent you a copy of this letter, which was dated Oct. 25th.

I wrote this letter with a sincere desire to bring about harmony. I supposed that it would be received and acted upon by President Sigman in the same spirit. But this was decidedly not the case. Mr. Sigman not only ignored the communication completely so far as our office was concerned, but is attempting to use it against the League. He has held conferences with members and stated that this letter indicated that the League was defeated, and otherwise made misuse of the letter. Under the circumstances there is nothing left for us to do but publish it, which will be done in such papers as we can reach with it.[1]

Inasmuch as a regular campaign is on foot in New York denying that you suggested the holding of such a conference, we are also publishing your letter of Sept. 12th. You will recall that I wrote you asking for permission to publish it. You stated that you would rather that it be not done, but that if I insisted upon it you had no objections. We believe that its publication is very necessary at this time in order to put ourselves in the proper light. I am sure you will realize our position and agree with us in it.

With best wishes and trusting to hear from you, I remain,

Fraternally yours,
Wm Z Foster

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. In "The Foster-Sigman Letter" (*Worker*, November 17, 1923), Foster published his October 25, 1923, letter to Morris Sigman and Debs's September 12, 1923, letter to Foster. Foster claimed that Sigman's failure to answer his letter proved that "his charges against the League are fallacious and that he does not want a settlement except by the destruction of the left-wing."

Otto Branstetter to EVD

November 8, 1923
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Comrade Debs:

Our dates commencing on the 13th are as follows:

November 13th . . . . . St. Louis
14th . . . . . —
15th . . . . . Kansas City
16th . . . . . —
17th . . . . . Joplin
18th . . . . . —
19th . . . . . —
20th . . . . . Parsons
21st . . . . . Pittsburgh
22nd . . . . . —
23rd . . . . . Sedalia
24th . . . . . —
25th . . . . . Centralia

We tried to place meetings in Kansas City, Kansas, and St. Joseph, Missouri, but were unable to secure halls. We also tried Wichita, Kansas, but it was impossible to get an advance organizer there and I am dropping it in favor of Sedalia, from which town I had a telegram to-day announcing that a hall can be secured for the 23rd.

It is important that we get into St. Louis in order to make the papers both Tuesday morning and afternoon. You know how much influence this last day newspaper advertising has and especially in St. Louis where the papers, especially the Post,[1] are very sympathetic. The Post will undoubtedly give us a front page write-up.

I wish very much that you would leave Terre Haute on any one of the afternoon trains Monday. They leave at

12:53 P.M.
1:14 P.M.
2:30 P.M.

All of them make it in about the same time. There is no train Tuesday morning which will get you into St. Louis in time even to make the afternoon papers and the night train which would put you in there early Tuesday morning leaves Terre Haute at 2:30 A.M. and I imagine that there is no sleeper on the track at Terre Haute. So it appears that for your own comfort and convenience, as well as for

the advertising purposes, it is highly desirable for you to take one of the afternoon trains. Please wire me either Friday or Saturday, telling me just what train you are coming on and I will arrange to meet you. If for any reason I should fail to meet you go to the Melbourne Hotel where I am making reservations.

I am enclosing a letter for you from Foster[2] which came to our office and was opened in the regular routine. It is needless for me to comment on it as you know how I feel and I suppose you will give them some additional ammunition and become still further involved in the controversy in which you have no place.

Be sure and wire me regarding the time of your departure and make it Monday afternoon if possible.

Fraternally yours,
Otto Branstetter
National Executive Secretary

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. *St. Louis Post-Dispatch.*
2. Foster's letter has not been found.

EVD to William V. Mahoney[1]

November 8, 1923
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Comrade Mahoney:

Please pardon this belated acknowledgment of your two recent (undated) letters, enclosing carbon copy of the "Argument favoring calling a coalition conference" which reached me when I was out on a speaking tour and had little or no time to devote to my correspondence. I wish it were possible for me to sit down with you and go over this matter that we might have a full and candid exchange of views in regard to it. But it is not possible for the present as I am back here from the East just long enough to clear away the accumulation before having to leave for the West to fill a series {of} speaking engagements.

I am upon principle favorable to the proposed coalition[2] and to the suggested conference to achieve that end, but I do not think this a favorable time for the Socialist party to engage in such an understanding. The reason for this is that the Socialist party, like your own organization, has been practically wiped out in most of the states during and since the war, and I do not think much of a coalition

could be effected by these fragments. The Socialist party is now happily building up again {with} the prospect of a revived and strengthened membership and equipment within the next few months. And this for the present must be our task and it at least is mine and I have pledged myself to concentrate upon it with all the impaired physical resources at my command.

The nearly three years I was cooped in down at Atlanta did not touch my spirit but the wretched food I had to eat starved my body, undermined my physical health, and materially impaired my strength and vigor. I am now beginning slowly to recover myself but I am also in the fight again and giving myself to the limit and perhaps now and then beyond {it} to the reconstruction of the Socialist party.

Before there can be any effective coalition there must be something to coalesce with and that is why I believe that before entering any such conference as you suggest we must first resurrect our party which was all but destroyed during the war, put it on the map again, breathe the breath of life into it once more, and set its machinery in operation along the right line.

I remember you well and with great respect and complete faith in your integrity and good intentions and I am sure the time is not distant when we shall be in the same camp again, fighting together side by side as in the past.

I was deeply pained and shocked to hear of the untimely death of Comrade Richman.[3] He was a most loyal comrade and a capable and tireless worker and his death is certainly a distinct loss to the American movement.

Thanking you for your kind consideration and hoping earnestly that in the not distant future the progressive forces of labor may be {brought} together in harmonious co-operation, and with all cordial regards to you personally I remain,

Yours fraternally,
[Eugene V. Debs]

TLc, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. William V. Mahoney (1869-1952) was elected president of the St. Paul (Minnesota) Trades and Labor Assembly in 1919 and was a founder of the *Minnesota Union Advocate,* which he edited until 1932. Mahoney was a key figure in the merger of the Working People's Nonpartisan Political League and the Farmer's Nonpartisan League into the Farmer-Labor party in 1923 and was that party's successful candidate for mayor of St. Paul in 1932.

2. Mahoney and Henry Teigan, secretary of the Farmer's Nonpartisan League, were working to make the Minnesota Farmer-Labor party the nucleus of a national Farmer-Labor party in time for the 1924 elections. Mahoney was executive secretary of a unity committee working toward that goal.

3. J. Webb Richman was secretary of the Washington, D.C., local of the Socialist party and a regular D.C. delegate to the party's national conventions. He died on October 5, 1923. *Socialist World*, November 1923.

EVD to William Z. Foster

November 8, 1923
Terre Haute, Indiana

Dear Comrade Foster:

Your letter of the 25th. ult. enclosing carbon copy of your communication of the same date to Morris Sigman, president I.L.G.W.U., came to me in New York at a very busy time and I have been kept fully occupied ever since which must be my apology for this belated acknowledgment.

Upon receiving your letter I decided to either see or communicate with Comrade Sigman as soon as possible. Fortunately he seemed to anticipate me and he with an associate national officer whose name I do not recall at this moment came to the hotel, and in an extended interview we went thoroughly over the matter in controversy between your League and their Union. I am sorry to have to inform you that President Sigman and his associate flatly declined to receive any overtures from you or your League or to have any dealings with your organization whatsoever. I endeavored to show why they should accept your proposition and meet your representatives as requested, giving them the reason why I should do so in their place, but they insisted that if I had had their experience with your organization I would be of a different opinion and approve their attitude. I shall not go into detail for it is not necessary and it would not help matters, nor is there time for doing so before I have to leave on my western trip. They declare that the sole purpose of your League is to serve the Workers' party and to turn the labor unions into communist {adjuncts} of the Third International and the Red Federation. They cited a number of instances to show that where your members could not rule the local by their arbitrary and bulldozing methods they did all they could to hamper them by inciting the members to strife and factional warfare. They also cited a number of instances to show that when applicants for membership were examined and found to belong to the Socialist party or to some other than the Workers' party they were told they were not eligible to the league and were therefore excluded from membership. Of course I was in {no} position to deny these and many other charges. They also asked why and how it happened

you were doing your "educational" work exclusively in the most radical and progressive unions such as theirs and the Amalgamated while making no effort whatever to break into {the} more reactionary ones where the education was most needed. In answer to the charge that he had voted for Gompers the answer was that you {and your followers} had voted for Lewis[1] of the miners, which has been declared about a "standoff," with honors equally divided on that point.[2] I am sorry not to be able to make a different kind of a report.

With regards and best wishes as ever,

Yours fraternally,
Eugene V. Debs

TLc, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. John Llewellyn Lewis (1880-1969) rose through the ranks of the United Mine Workers of America to become the union's international president in 1920. During the next forty years until his retirement in 1960, Lewis became one of the most controversial and successful of America's labor leaders, beating back challenges to his power in the UMW, winning concessions and benefits from management for miners, and deeply engaging labor in national politics. As head of the Committee for Industrial Organization and its successor, the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), Lewis was credited during the Depression with bringing millions of previously unorganized, unskilled, and semiskilled workers into industrial unions in the steel, auto, rubber, and other industries and greatly enlarging the membership of the UMW. In 1935, Lewis played a key role in the drawing up and enactment of Section 7 (a) of the National Industrial Recovery Act, the basic enabling legislation involved in the successful unionization carried out by the CIO.

2. At the 1921 AFL national convention, Lewis had received about one-third of the delegates' votes in an unsuccessful attempt to unseat Gompers. Bernard Mandel, *Samuel Gompers* (Antioch Press, 1963), 510.

EVD to David Karsner

November 10, 1923
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear David:

I have been very busy and not very well or your good letter of the 5th. would have been more promptly answered. It is gratifying to me to know that my suggestion as to your writing a completer "Life" has met with your hearty approval. I agree with all you say in regard to the documents, letters etc., and only lack time now to select the ones of which you would wish to make use. I am just getting ready to leave for the West and it is impossible for me to get these things together in the little time I have here between engagements. I have

a great mass of letters, clippings, documents, manuscripts, etc. (all mixed up, and {it has} continued to grow ever since I went to prison) which I have not yet found time to get into any sort of shape for use. I shall do this as soon as possible but cannot promise to do anything until I get through with the season's speaking engagements. How soon this may be I cannot at present say. But I shall keep your request in mind and when the time comes I shall of course be glad to place anything and everything you need in your work that is in my hands at your service. Let me suggest that if you have not yet seen the department assigned to my collection in the Rand School[1] that you do so at your convenience. I sent them a lot of old books, records, pictures, personal scrapbooks, etc. for which I no longer had room here. These included the Locomotive Fireman's Magazines from the first number issued in 1877 with which I was connected until 1894. In the scrapbooks you will find a lot of personal matter from which you may care to quote as your leisure will allow in a sort of a preparatory way. These records in one form or another contain most of my life of any public interest in the form of raw material. You will find in the large bound newspaper volumes in the collection the pages taken from the current press over a good many years containing the record of events in which I have been interested. Among these you will find the files of the Railway Times, organ of the American Railway Union, probably the only copy in existence, and in these there is material for the very eventful period to me covering the years between 1893 and 1897, the beginning and end of the A.R.U. and the beginning of the Social Democracy, now the Socialist Party.

I was more than delighted to have the brief visit with you. My heart was glad every moment and on my return Theodore and Katherine and Gertrude were all happy to hear from you and to receive the message of your loving remembrance.

Love and life to you increasingly!

Yours always,
E. V. Debs

TLS, NN Kars.

1. Debs's collection at the Rand School, now in the Tamiment Library at New York University, is largely reproduced in the microfilm edition of *The Papers of Eugene V. Debs 1834-1945*. Karsner did not carry forward his plan to write a second, "completer" biography of Debs.

Theodore Debs to Joseph E. Cohen

November 23, 1923
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Joe:

This morning for the first time in days there is a visible change in Gene's condition.[1] The nights for more than a week were hell wrapped in fury and I wondered from day to day whether Gene's body could still survive the tortures of another twenty-four hours. Last night, the first night since he returned from New York, there were signs of improvement—he got some sleep, a thing he had almost forgotten, and the suffering which he had endured for days was in a decided degree modified. If his present condition continues for a few days it will be most helpful in restoring some of his lost vitality. Two {straight} months of travel, strain, speaking, interviews daily, meeting scores of people, irregularity of life etc. etc. at Gene's age and with what he has undergone in forty years of speaking and organizing was too damned much for his vitality. Such booking would tax the strength of one much younger in years; in his case—to put it *damned* mildly—it was asinine.

Your solicitude, old scout, warms and cheers the soul.

Faithfully yours,
Theodore Debs

TLS, NNU Tam, Debs Collection.

1. In a letter to George Sylvester Viereck dated November 16, 1923, Theodore Debs wrote that Debs had "returned from the East indisposed" and that "the doctor ordered the cancelling of all his speaking engagements along with an indefinite period of rest and quiet." InTI, Debs Collection. The *Socialist World*, November 1923, announced that "owing to a severe attack of heart trouble, Comrade Debs' meetings in the central states during November and December have been cancelled, and also the tentative arrangements for eastern work during the winter."

Theodore Debs to Joseph E. Cohen

December 21, 1923
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Joe:

Gene is getting along, slowly enough, to be sure, but he is getting on and that is of the most concern. He is still confined to his room

where he has been for the past five weeks; but the crisis is over, he no longer suffers the agony he did for a considerable time, and when he again learns how to sleep, and this will come with rest and quiet, he will, we are sure, make much more rapid progress toward recovery. The present attack of all others was the most severe that he has ever had and Gene came nearer crossing the line than he will ever again without slipping over the border. He is still very weak as the result of the terrible suffering he endured and which seems to have sapped him of the little vitality that he had when he finished his tour of two months in New York City. This is now his greatest trouble and it will take some time to restore his strength.

We hope, dear boy, that you and all your family are enjoying the blessings of health, that the joys of the Holiday Season will be yours and that your New Year is bright with hope and promise.

Faithfully yours,
Theodore Debs

TLS, NNU Tam, Debs Collection.

Theodore Debs to David Karsner

March 1, 1924
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dearest David:

This note is from me instead of Gene because he is still laid up and coming but very slowly out of his nervous collapse, the fourth he has suffered and the very worst of all. He will go to Lindlahr's as soon as he [is] able to leave here. I have been his nurse and with him day and night, for some weeks so there has been but little chance for anything else. He has a mighty will and purpose to pull through and finish some work he has planned and that will tide him over.

Your fine little letter of the 20th was read by us with hearty appreciation. Yes, Washington, the national capital! What a stew, and how it simmers, sizzles, and stinks! Whew!! The proverbial dog on the gut wagon has vacated. It was too much for him. Your comment is delicious. You see the whole performance with a clear eye and an understanding heart. They will not do a damned thing to one of those infernal scoundrels, not even McCray,[1] colossal and brazen a thief as he is, will ever see the inside of a steel cage. All these are reserved

for the petit larceny thieves that filch a second-hand chew of tobacco and thus attack the foundations of society and have to be locked up for the rest of their lives. Oh, hell! It is enough to make men and angels weep.

We are sending you, dearest David, as always, our love.

Eternally yours
Theodore Debs

ALS, NN Kars.

1. As noted, Indiana Governor Warren McCray was convicted of mail fraud and sentenced to a ten-year term at Atlanta. He resigned as governor in April 1924.

Joseph Schlossberg[1] to Theodore Debs

March 17, 1924
New York City

Dear Comrade Debs:

I cannot tell you how grateful I am to you for having forwarded to me Gene's inspiring May Day message[2] and to your great brother for having dictated it though he is so ill.

The Amalgamated members join the great host of Gene's loyal friends in their prayers for his speedy recovery. If Gene is well enough to do so, we shall all be happy to have him address the Amalgamated Six Biennial Convention next May at Philadelphia.

Thanking you again, I am

Fraternally yours,
Joseph Schlossberg
General Secretary-Treasurer.

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Joseph Schlossberg (1875-1971) emigrated from his native Russia to the United States in 1888, worked in the garment industry in New York City, and played an active role in the unionization of the industry. In 1914, he was one of the organizers of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America (ACWA) and was named secretary-treasurer of the new union. He held that position until 1940 and edited the union's weekly paper, the *Advance*.

2. Debs's "The Amalgamated and May Day," written "from a sick room," appeared in the *Advance*, May 2, 1924. In it, Debs called the ACWA "the most advanced, progressive, militant and uncompromising labor organization in America."

W. M. Davidson to Theodore Debs

March 29, 1924
Chicago, Illinois

My dear Mr. Debs:

We are getting out a special memorial issue of/the Lindlahr Magazine and would be glad to print any expression of appreciation of Dr. Lindlahr's work you may wish to send. Will you please send any contribution as soon as possible as this will be published as early as we can send it to press.

Thanking you, I am

Yours faithfully,
THE LINDLAHR MAGAZINE
W. M. Davidson
Editor.

P.S. We hope to hear better news of Eugene soon: please do not fail to let us know if there is anything we can possibly do.

[EVD tribute to Dr. Lindlahr][1]

The untimely passing of Doctor Henry Lindlahr brings {inexpressible} grief to the many thousands who were relieved of pain and restored to health by his Nature Cure ministrations, and is a distinct loss to the world. He was a unique and commanding figure in the healing profession and the wonderful institution he established and the great work he accomplished will perpetuate his memory to the remotest generations.

Doctor Lindlahr was the incarnation of the system for the relief and cure of the afflicted and suffering, and never was a man more conscientiously devoted to his task than this great and good {physician} whose sole thought, desire and aspiration seemed to be to relieve human suffering and unhappiness and bring health and hope and joy to the afflicted and despairing children of men. His was the life of utter consecration and martyrdom. In his eager, earnest, passionate desire to serve others he entirely lost sight of himself. I never knew so patient, cheerful, conscientious and tireless a worker. Early and late, all the days of the week, including Sundays and holidays, he was at his desk or in the class room, or lecture forum, or in the sick chambers of his patients, advising, counselling, ministering to the afflicted with unceasing care and devotion, and constantly devising new and improved methods of carrying forward his great work of

banishing disease and enthroning health and happiness as the normal state of humanity.

Doctor Lindlahr was possessed of the rarest, sweetest and noblest personality. It was impossible to come into contact with him, look into his kindly eyes and feel the touch of his radiant spirit without loving him. He instantaneously inspired faith and confidence as the basis of his Nature Cure treatment.

The world has lost a high-souled, noble-natured man, a loyal and devoted friend, and a true master in the art of healing in the passing of Doctor Lindlahr. Peace to his ashes and honor to his memory!

Eugene V. Debs

TLS (with copy of EVD tribute to Dr. Henry Lindlahr), InTI, Debs Collection.

1. *Lindlahr Magazine*, n.d., 1924. InTI, Debs Collection.

Jean Longuet to Theodore Debs

April 7, 1924
Paris, France

Dear Comrade DEBS,

I have been extremely pleased to get news from you as from our dear EUGENE and I do hope that his health is improving rapidly. At the same time I am sure that his splendid spirit which is such an inspiration for all those who approach him is as fine as ever.

Please convey to him all my greetings and love. I hope he will benefit in the sanatorium at Chicago where he was so well treated last time and from where he had just come out when I had the joy to meet him for the first time, in "Windy City," in November 1922.

I am very sorry your dear brother can not come with us to help us in our great present electoral battle from which we are expecting altogether good result.

Of course we have to face a tremendous money power which is behind the so called "National Bloc" but at the same time there is a tremenduous current against this party in power all through the country and Poincare's popularity[1] is only a fairy tail written daily by the various foreign correspondents in Paris who are fooled by the Government and do not see the real state of mind of the masses of the french people.

I hope that next summer perhaps, dear GENE will be able to come to your old Alsace[2] and generally speaking to Europe.

Fraternally yours.
Jean Longuet

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Raymond Poincaré (1860-1934) held a number of posts in the French government, including those of premier and president, before World War I; he served a second term as premier from January 1922 to June 1924. His policies concerning German reparations, the occupation of the Ruhr in 1923, and heavy taxation at home contributed to the defeat of his government by the Cartel of the Left (Radicals and Socialists) in the national elections of May 11, 1924.

2. Debs's parents had come from Colmar in Alsace.

Theodore Debs to George Schilling

April 17, 1924
Terre Haute, Indiana

Dear George Schilling:

Your favor of the 15th. inst. with clippings enclosed, addressed to Gene is duly received. I regret to advise you that Gene is confined to his bed as the result of nervous exhaustion, due to overstrain, the fourth and the most persistent attack he has yet experienced. His speaking engagements were cancelled and during the past several months that he has been ill many matters of more or less importance, including his correspondence, have been woefully neglected. When he is strong enough to leave he will go to a sanitarium for a course of scientific treatment.

The many letters that come to him are being withheld for the present as the doctor demands absolute rest and quiet but I beg to assure you that when Gene is again strong enough I will see that your very interesting communication comes into his hands.

Yes, he surely remembers you[1] and you would not have needed to identify yourself; and furthermore, I can say, that he has always had for you a very high regard. What you say of Wilson and the probable resolution the Democratic convention will pass will make Gene laugh heartily. The militarists and 100 per cent "patriots" were doing that very same thing with Harding but the cracking of the Teapot Dome[2] and its oily trail to the very door of the white house necessitated the soft pedal.

I am glad to know that you are very well and going strong at 74. In all the world the greatest of all blessings is good health.

I am returning the clipping from the Tribune as requested as it will be some time before your communication comes into Gene's hands and with the mass of matter that comes to us it might get lost or misplaced.

With all kind regards and the best of wishes I am

Fraternally yours,
Theodore Debs

TLS, IHi, Schilling Papers.

1. As noted, George Schilling had served as secretary of the Illinois Bureau of Labor Statistics under Governor John Altgeld.

2. The most notorious of the "Harding Scandals," Teapot Dome involved the lease by Secretary of the Interior Albert B. Fall of government oil reserves to private oil companies whose officers were found to have given Fall interest-free loans. Fall was convicted of accepting bribes, sentenced to one year in prison, and fined $100,000.

EVD to Theodore Debs

May ?, 1924
[Elmhurst, Illinois]

My dear old Pal,

Long distance call from Toledo just now—Don't know who it was—he was told I could not be talked to & that I must be excused as it was impossible to see & talk to the many callers without neglecting treatment & preventing me from getting well.

It rained in a torrent last night & "*the thunder roared & the lightning flashed*" all night. The first time you see Frank Roderus[1] repeat to him the words in those quotation marks & you will see him "roar" & "flash" with laughter, & he will give you the rest of the quotation I can't risk inserting here as it might arouse Anthony Comstock's ghost.[2] It has gotten hot as hell here over night it is now broiling, blistering mid-summer & we're damned glad of it because we can now get our air & sun baths, run barefoot & barehead when walking on the lawn, & all the outdoor exercises in the program—My urine is to be tested to night & tomorrow to see condition of my kidneys, the progress I am making, & to regulate my diet.

Yours of Saturday just recd. including the clippings. Thanks for all! The old chap 106 years old whose picture was in the paper you sent was born 2 years before Dandy & looks like a husky old scout yet—I'd like to see the old bird & pat him on the back.

I see from clipping you sent that Jacob Cadden[3] our Collector has

been sued by his lawyers. Well, I'll not hold that against him, knowing lawyers as I do, & am surely with him until something more appears to substantiate his guilt. As between him & them he's entitled to the preference.

I see they're to pave 8th st. It ought to be done for the street is a disgrace to the city. It will cost something & it will bring {a} lot more traffic but sooner or later it will have to bé done & might as well be done now as later. The street was a good, first class street & we paid well to have it done & it is a damned shame that the street was ruined by contractors who dug it up repeatedly & never put it in order again. But for that the street would still be in good order & the city should pay for the re-paving but of course the graft has to be put up by the property owners & it serves a man right for being damned fool enough to be a "property owner." The acquisition of "property" is the beginning of hell & all kinds of evil & ought to be.

The enclosed note from Joe Cohen (noble spirit & loyal scout) need not be answered.

Please say to Hayes, inside of enclosed letter, that I have read carefully all he says, that I very much appreciate his kindly interest but that I am getting along as well here as could be expected & that I expect to leave here very *much* much recovered, if not entirely so, in the next few weeks. Pls. send him my thanks & love & tell him I especially appreciate him as a loyal comrade of many years standing & enclose in your letter *1 D.C. & 1 Cooke.*[4]

Pls. say to Brewer[5] that when I heard of his passing through here I felt deeply disappointed not to see him & that if I had known of his being so near I would certainly have arranged to converse with him. Tell him Bertha White sent me his loving message & that it went straight to my heart & made me feel all the more keenly the disappointment in having missed him. Tell him that I rejoice in his nomination (as do you also) & that we most heartily wish his triumphant election. Tell him you sent me his letter, that I appreciated every line & word in it, and that nothing could give me greater pleasure than to comply with his request were it not for the peculiar & unfavorable circumstances at present surrounding me. Tell him there is not a man in the whole movement I would serve more readily or more cheerfully in the manner suggested than I would him, but for the present I have reached the utmost limit of my influence in raising revenue from personal friends & comrades to serve party purposes. Ever since the war, say to him, the Socialist party has been overwhelmed with debt {and} hounded by creditors, and that it has negotiated loans until its credit is completely exhausted. Tell him that to meet these frequent & urgent party demands for funds I have made special appeals through

the National office, by correspondence & otherwise, calling upon personal friends & comrades over & over again until they ceased to respond from the sheer fact that the calls from me & from other sources became so frequent that they could not keep up with them, & so they ceased to respond to any further calls for funds. Tell George it hurts me like the devil not to be able to render him such a slight service & that under any other circumstances he would have my hearty co-operation to the limit. Tell him you will not enter into further detail for you know that he will understand and that if we ourselves were not drained & flat after the several years of hell we've been through, there is nothing he could ask of us that it would not be a joy for us to do for him & for his {welfare} & success. Send dearest love & blessings to him and his noble wife Grace, from both our families & tell him we always hold him in the first line trenches of our affection & devotion.

With a tweak
Of the beak,
And a plug
in the mug

Your old pal
Gene

Love to Gertrude & a biff in the diaphragm to her lank husband.

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Frank Roderus was on the staff of the *Terre Haute Post*. He was one of the welcoming committee members at the time of Debs's return from Atlanta in December 1921. *Post*, December 28, 1921.

2. Anthony Comstock (1844-1915) achieved national fame during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as a relentless censor of "obscene" literature and art. As a special agent of the Post Office Department and secretary of the Society for the Suppression of Vice, Comstock devoted his life to the pursuit and prosecution of the creators and publishers of materials that failed to meet his moral standards, and his career made Comstockery synonymous with moral busybodyism.

3. Jacob Cadden was manager of the Adjustment Bureau, a bill-collecting agency in Terre Haute. City directory, 1924.

4. Theodore Debs sent out a steady stream of Debs's pamphlets from their Terre Haute office and a large collection of them is preserved in the Debs Home, but "D.C." and "Cooke" have not been identified.

5. George D. Brewer, Debs's friend from their days at the *Appeal to Reason*, was an unsuccessful Farmer-Labor party candidate for Congress in Minnesota in 1924.

Theodore Debs to Joseph S. Labadie

June 10, 1924
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Jo:

The kindness of your great loving heart is perennial. It touches all our sensibilities and quickens our life currents in a way which words cannot tell. Your good letter of the 6th. inst. is with me as also the pamphlet of our good comrade, Dr. Sherman, for both of which I am profoundly grateful. I note all your letter contains and the beautiful and generous proposal of the Doctor and appreciate it all to the last atom of my being. However, getting Gene to take medicine or anything in the nature of a serum would be a story all by itself. During the winter when his condition was critical and when his heart was flickering with the uncertainty of the flame of a burnt-out wick we were almost required to use force in making him take a heart stimulent. He is again taking a Nature Cure treatment, in which he has unbounded faith, and which did wonders for him on a previous occasion and which he firmly believes will again restore his health. Since leaving here his condition has slowly but steadily improved in spite of the ugly weather which has kept him so much indoors when he should have been out. I shall bring the matter to Gene's attention and should the need become urgent we will use all our power of persuasion first—and then force. Meantime I beg of you to return our heartfelt thanks to Dr. Sherman and assure him of our grateful appreciation of his loving offices.

Believe me ever with greetings of love to you and Mrs. Jo and to our good Comrade Sherman I am,

Faithfully ever,
Theodore Debs

TLS, MiU, Labadie Collection.

EVD to David Karsner

July 19, 1924
Elmhurst, Illinois

My dear "Davy,"

Some days have passed since your loving and sympathetic message was received, but the Doctors here, who have had a time with the

many visitors, and who have been trying to keep me quiet so that I might benefit by the treatment, have asked me to reduce my letter-writing to a minimum on account of my nervous and worn condition, and this must be my apology for this belated acknowledgment of your very kind and comforting remembrance. No, Dear David, I did not come here merely to rest but because I was suffering from a very serious illness which came near putting an end to my existence. For several months at home I was confined to my bed almost continuously, unable, most of the time, to lie down without suffocating on account of my impaired heart action due to badly damaged kidneys which have yielded but slowly to treatment. I have over-taxed myself when I was not too strong with the result that I suffered a complete collapse from which I am only now beginning to recover. The Doctors regarded my case as a very serious one but they {now} give me the confident assurance that if I will but sever my connection with all my usual activities and give myself up wholly to quiet and rest and the prescribed course of nature treatment, I shall in due time recover my heart. But it is a slow process and it is not easy for me to keep patient so long a time, away from my loved ones, and out of touch with the associations that are the very essence of life to me. But I shall not trouble you further with my personal ills. I only wished you to know the truth in answer to your anxious inquiry, else I should have avoided mention of the matter at all, as I usually do.

I note with deep interest and full appreciation what you say about the value of friendship and need not say that I am in hearty accord with the beautiful sentiments you express in such exquisite terms. The matter of what a man believes politically or otherwise is his own affair, and unless he is guilty of moral turpitude there is no reason why his friendships should be in the least affected on that account.

I remember, dear Davy, and so does my wife, and so do Theodore and his wife and we always shall, each loving and appreciative word you have written of us, myself in particular, each act of kindness shown us, and each service of loyal and generous devotion you have rendered me and mine since first we came to know each other, and I speak for all of our family when I say that we rejoice always in hearing of your well-doing and that from our hearts we wish you health and happiness and abundance of all that enriches and beautifies life.

Lovingly as ever
E. V. Debs

ALS, NN Kars.

William Z. Foster to EVD

July 30, 1924
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Comrade Debs:—

In your letter of July 23rd[1] to me you evade the main issue. You fail to tell the reason why Debs, the "revolutionary" Socialist, endorses LaFollette, the anti-Socialist. I can appreciate your difficulty in this matter. You content yourself simply with making a series of attacks against the Workers Party, as though that were to blame. These I cannot permit to pass unchallenged.

You speak of the "sorry and discrediting" figure which the Workers Party will cut in the coming election campaign, as compared with the role of the Socialist Party. Let us see. Faced by the great petty bourgeois movement headed by LaFollette,[2] which is engulfing whole sections of the labor movement, the Workers Party has dared to stand true to its revolutionary mission and to denounce this false leader and his class collaboration program. It ventures to defend the slogans of the class struggle and to make the election fight upon a revolutionary basis. As against this uncompromising attitude, the Socialist Party has abandoned even the last remnants of its lip-service to revolutionary principles and is unreservedly supporting the ridiculous and reactionary trust-busting program of LaFollette; it has betrayed the farmer-labor movement and, adopting the C.P.P.A. plan, it will either accept openly or wink at the endorsement of "friends" of labor on the two old party tickets in the approved Gompers manner. You may blind yourself to the significance of this pitiful surrender to LaFollette and Gompers, but the revolutionary elements in the working class will not. Without difficulty they will discern that in the present situation it is not the W.P. but the S.P. which is cutting a "sorry and discrediting" figure. The recent letter of Landfersiek,[3] former National Secretary of the S.P., condemning LaFollette and endorsing the Workers party candidates, voices the true sentiments of the few proletarian elements still remaining in the S.P.

In one respect your letter is correct—I have an exceedingly poor opinion of the Socialist party. I have learned something of the treachery of its sister parties in Europe, of how they have betrayed the revolution time and again. Abundant experience shows that the American Socialist Party is cut from the same cloth. The Hillquits and Bergers are only Scheidemanns and Noskes[4] lacking opportunity. Consequently, I, for one, expected little else from the Socialist Party in Cleveland than the complete surrender that it made to LaFollette. It

was to be expected, however, that you, at least, would sound a revolutionary note of opposition against the opportunistic debacle. In the past couple of years you have winked at the oppostion of the S.P. to the amalgamation of the trade unions, its calumniation of Soviet Russia, its refusal to form a united front on the political field, and its enforcement of many reactionary policies which run counter to the principles you have so often enunciated from the platform. This failure to fight for these principles in the S.P. was bad enough, but now when you not only acquiesce in the surrender to LaFollette, but actually defend it, you by that action definitely leave the camp of the revolutionaries and go over to the opportunists and petty bourgeois reformists.

But you contend that we Communists have no right to condemn your endorsement of LaFollette, because you say we proposed to endorse him ourselves. This is an unpardonable misstatement. Never at any time did the Workers Party propose to endorse LaFollette or his program. On the contrary, the W.P. has long been keenly awake to the menace of LaFollette-ism and has been fighting it on all fronts. This is proved by a hundred articles and statements in our party press. For the Workers Party a leading tactical consideration has been how best to fight LaFolletteism. The Workers Party realized the influence LaFollette had on the farmer-labor ranks. In order to prevent the absorption of the farmer-labor movement by LaFollette and to prevent the isolation of the Workers Party from the Farmer-Labor Party forces, the Workers Party considered the adoption of the following policy, which, however, was not supported by the Communist International: If the St. Paul Farmer-Labor Party Convention nominated LaFollette over the opposition of the Workers Party, we would not split away from it on that issue, but would accept, under protest, an alliance of the Farmer-Labor Party and a third party in support of LaFollette's candidacy and would endeavor to organize the Farmer-Labor Party during the campaign as a class party in oppostion to the LaFollette third party. Under any circumstances, the Workers Party would have carried on a campaign of strong opposition against LaFollette and his program.

It was later proposed to accept him as a candidate at the St. Paul Convention of the Farmer-Labor Party, but only upon the condition that he subscribe to the radical program of the Farmer-Labor Party, run as that party's candidate, and accept its control over his electoral campaign and campaign funds. In other words, LaFollette would have had to cut loose from all his capitalist party connections, accept a real proletarian program, and head a genuine farmer-labor ticket. Even then the Workers Party would have accepted him only under protest.

It would have continued its ceaseless criticism of his petty bourgeois notions and its propagation of revolutionary principles among the masses in the Farmer-Labor party. It is absurd to campare this revolutionary policy with the S.P. surrender to LaFollette. Hillquit, without a word of protest in the convention, humbly swallowed LaFollette's program of petty bourgeois reform, his anti-labor party attitude, his "reward your friends and punish your enemies" political policy, and his insulting and dictatorial control. And now you endorse this proceeding. As for the W.P., when it saw that because of the surrender of reactionary trade union leaders and pseudo-revolutionaries to LaFollette it would be impossible to organize sufficient masses in the new Farmer-Labor party to make a successful united front fight against LaFollette, it raised its own banner and will make the fight in the open field.

In times past you have stated repeatedly from the platform that you admire Lenin as the greatest figure produced in the world war. Yet, in your letter, you sneer, in orthodox yellow-Socialist fashion, at our affiliation with the institution that incorporates the very soul of Leninism, the Third International. Tastes in Internationals vary. You, although claiming to be a left-wing revolutionary, calmly content yourself to accept the leadership of the Second International, the organization of Scheidemann, Noske, and other butchers and betrayers of the revolution. As for us, we repudiate such traitors and all association with them. We deem it not only absolutely vital to the revolutionary movement in this country, but also an honor to be associated internationally with the men who carried through the Russian revolution and with those who are making the revolutionary fight in all other countries. We make no apology for accepting the guidance of the Third International. On the contrary, we glory in it. Our party is proud to be a section of the revolutionary world organization, the Communist International.

Fraternally yours,
Wm Z Foster

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. In his letter to Foster of July 23, 1924, Debs defended the Socialist party's and his own endorsement of Robert M. La Follette for president, expressed his "poor opinion of the Communist Party," and noted that, "having no Vatican in Moscow to guide me I must follow the light I have." Foster had written to Debs on July 15, 1924, to say that "your statement in support of La Follette . . . is an astounding document" and that "the Socialist Party is liquidated, together with its last remnants of leadership, which were in your hands, and which you now voluntarily surrender to La Follette." *Socialist World,* August 1924. As the Workers (Communist) party

candidate for president in 1924, Foster received 38,080 votes, 0.13 percent of the votes cast.

2. As the Progressive party candidate in 1924, La Follette won 4,814,050 votes and took Wisconsin's thirteen electoral votes.

3. Walter Lanfersiek's letter to the *Daily Worker* (July 24, 1924) charged that "men like Debs are forsaking the working class position" by endorsing La Follette and urged readers to "march one step nearer the Revolution with Foster and Gitlow," the Workers party candidates.

4. Gustav Noske (1868-1946) was a socialist writer and Reichstag deputy who strongly supported the war and directed the suppression of the sailors' and Spartacist workers' rebellions in Germany at the end of the war. In February 1919, he was appointed defense minister by Philipp Scheidemann and soon thereafter suppressed workers' uprisings in Berlin and the Bavarian Soviet Republic. Noske resigned as defense minister in March 1920 and served as lord lieutenant of Hanover until 1933, when he was ousted by Hitler.

EVD to Theodore Debs

August 5, 1924
Elmhurst, Illinois

My dearly beloved old Pard,

Here's my hand with all my heart in congratulation upon your birthday,[1] the day that gave to me the sweetest, loyalest, and noblest brother in all the world. How I wish you were near enough that I might wrap you in my arms and kiss and hold you to my heart and try to tell you what you have been and are to me, and how infinitely beautiful and precious you are and ever will be to me to the very last conscious moment of my life!

As I think of you, dear brother o' mine, this day of your coming into the world to bless and enrich it with your great heart, your pure, white soul, and your inexpressibly sweet and spotless personality, I am hoping most fervently the day may be one of unalloyed happiness to you and dear Gertrude, and that you may both live to enjoy in fullest measure many, many happy returns of the day. You are blessed infinitely with your beautiful and matchless Marguerite, of whom we are all so proud, and you may well feel that life to you has meant divine fulfillment and boundless spiritual riches.

With love with all my heart to you and dear Gertrude and sweet Marguerite, I am yours in eternal devotion

Gene

I'm sending you by parcel post a modest little birthday offering.

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Theodore Debs's birthday was August 20.

EVD to Theodore Debs

[August 7 1924]
[Elmhurst, Illinois]

My dearest old Buddy,

Your letter of the 5th is sweet and beautiful and comforting in every line and word and warms all the cockles of my heart. I am sure I know how inexpressibly eager and anxious you are for me to get well and I feel that I would be guilty not only of disappointment but of betrayal if I failed to [do] so on your account. Your big, wonderful, loyal heart has made you suffer every particle of pain I have suffered, a case of brotherly affection and devotion without a parallel I know of.

Don't be too hard on Branstetter.[1] He had a side you never saw & therefore can not understand while the side you did see was unfortunately not calculated to win approval. But he was loyal to the cause & went through fire to serve it & few will ever know all he and his family suffered & sacrificed for the party and the movement. ——Glad you sent "Debs & the Poets" and other matters as requested. Thanks! And thanks also for the copy of the volume asked for just recd. & for the copy of the pamphlet "The Negro Worker"[2] that came with it. Everything I have requested has been received & everything is in good order here. Note what you say about Rev. Deer[3] & glad I sent him & other ministers & to Mrs. Wiley[4] a copy of "Patriots & Traitors."[5] It will likely touch some tender spots. Glad you also remembered K. of C. & Y.M.I.[6] It will feel like the heels of the Prairieton Jack in those religious (?) and patriotic (!) hindquarters.

Have just recd. a letter from Dan Hoan, Mayor of Milwaukee.[7] He & his wife are at their summer cottage among the pines of Northern Wisconsin, by the side of a little lake. They will leave there Sept 1st & they offer me the use of their cottage as long as I want it. It's all furnished with comfortable beds stoves, fuel etc. etc. [one word missing] its 9 miles from railroad, almost inaccesible and as near paradise as we can hope to see on earth. He says they see Deer & other big game almost every day.

It's mighty fine of him & I'm strongly inclined to accept. I shall have to recuperate & build up a couple of months after I get through with the treatment here & that will be an ideal place for it. Dr. Lindlahr[8] will be here to examine me today. My kidneys are mending slowly but I'll not be safe till they are restored & function normally. If I should leave before my kidneys & secondarily my heart are sound & well again, my trouble would soon return worse than ever. You see

that very clearly & you are absolutely right in emphatically insisting on a complete cure. Dr. Lindlahr & Drs. Albrecht & Holway[9] will let me go the day they are sure I am safe & I am leaving the matter entirely with them. I am asking Mable La Rue[10] to be here at 2 Sunday afternoon next—she will not be here long & her call will not disturb me. I've not had a visitor in a month or more.

My love to you and dear Gertrude, all my heart holds, and a thousand fondest wishes!

Ever & always

Your devoted old pal
Gene

Was at a Movie Show last night for the second time since I've been here. The picture was Sinclair Lewis' "Babbitt"[11] and it was very good.

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Otto Branstetter, who had served as national secretary of the Socialist party from 1919 to 1924, died in Chicago on August 2, 1924. *Socialist World*, September 1924.

2. Debs's pamphlet "The Negro Workers" was based on a speech he gave at the Commonwealth Casino in New York City on October 30, 1923. In it he urged "the colored people represented here tonight" to support "the high principles and the lofty ideals of the Socialist movement." InTI, Debs Collection.

3. Roy B. Deer was pastor of the First Baptist Church in Terre Haute.

4. Anna Bowles Wiley was women's editor of the *Terre Haute Tribune*.

5. In "Patriots and Traitors" (*St. Louis Labor*, July 5, 1924), a widely reprinted essay, Debs denounced the "patriots" who were urging "preparedness for the next war" and demanded that "they go to war and get into the trenches when war comes." He was, he said, "an avowed traitor to capitalism," which made war inevitable.

6. Knights of Columbus and Young Men's Institute.

7. Hoan's letter inviting Debs to his cabin on Carpenter Lake has not been found, but in a letter to Debs dated August 29, 1924, Hoan wrote that he was "happy . . . to receive your card saying that you had planned to accept our invitation to go to Carpenter Lake" and gave Debs a detailed description of the cabin and the surrounding area. InTI, Debs Collection.

8. Dr. Victor H. Lindlahr (1898-1969), Henry Lindlahr's son, graduated from the Chicago College of Osteopathy in 1918 and joined his father at Lindlahr Sanitariums. He later became prominent as a writer and radio commentator on diet and nutritional subjects, and one of his books, *You Are What You Eat* (1941), was widely read. Lindlahr amassed a fortune in the promotion of popular diet supplements, such as Geritol and Serutan. *New York Times*, January 28, 1969.

9. Dr. Frederick C. Albrecht (1893-1968) and Dr. Eva Holway were staff physicians at Lindlahr Sanitarium. Both had been at Lindlahr since its opening in 1913 and they were married in 1925. Eva Holway Albrecht to Ruth Strand, February 16, 1963. InTI, Debs Collection.

10. Mabel Guinnip La Rue (1880-1971) was the author of a score of popular juvenile fiction books.

11. The first film version of *Babbitt,* starring Willard Louis in the title role, was reviewed in the *New York Times* on July 15, 1924.

Theodore Debs to EVD

August 8, 1924
[Terre Haute, Indiana]

My dear beloved old Pard:

The feelings that well up within me as I hold in my hands your tender and loving letter, fervid with the love of your own great, generous heart, and sweet as the very soul of you, cannot be depicted in words or characters decipherable to another. There are times when one's emotions submerge one as completely as a tidal wave sweeps over every obstacle in its path, when one's feelings are strongly charged with an indefinable something that, paradoxical as it may appear, overwhelms the heart with inexpressible gladness while spontaneously the eyes are filled with tears. And so it is with me this morning. Your letter is {as} a current that plays upon my emotions as an artist thumbs the strings of a harp into whose soft and sweet tones he pours all the love and passion of a rare and beautiful soul. I'm in a paroxism of delight. Your words are sweet to my ears as a mother's good-night lullably and more precious by far than all the famed riches of the rulers of the world.

I never think of my birthday without thinking of Daisy, dear sainted soul, through whose suffering I came into the world, and whose greatest joy in life was the care and comfort of her little brood, and for whom no sacrifice was too great. To have had and known such a mother, beautiful, tender of heart, radiant of soul, was to have had earth's greatest blessing and divinest gift. How partial the gods were in giving Daisy to us and how great our obligations to them!

Your congratulations, however, are a trifle premature, my birthday being on the 20th., but they are none the less sweet to my soul, nor am I the less grateful for your loving words which my heart will hold fast and keep warm within its most sacred recess with devotion and fond affection that will cease only when its beatings are silenced in death.

The box of fruit came while we were at breakfast. It was a banquet to both eye and palate, the finest we have ever seen. When the cover was removed it bore the appearance of a unique boquet, arranged by dainty and artistic hands, and with all the fragrance of rare and costly flowers. How loving and kind to think of us! With outstretched arms Gertrude and I gather you to our hearts, hold you warmly,

tenderly and upon your sweet lips we place our kisses of gratitude, affection and love.

Yours, old pard, until the last sunset—the *last!*

TLc, InTI, Debs Collection.

EVD to Theodore Debs

August 20, 1924
Elmhurst, Illinois

My dearest old Pal,

This is your birthday and my arms are about you and my kisses on your lips in loving congratulations and in wishing you and dear Gertrude a most beautiful day and many, many happy returns. I shall think of you tenderly, lovingly and loyally all this blessed day and thank whatever gods there be for having given you to us and to the world. I shall think gratefully of all you have been to me in affectionate, loyal, brotherly devotion, without ever a flicker or shadow of turning since the happy day we came into each other's lives, a mutual beautiful devotion that will end only when the last breath leaves our bodies.

I have your letter of Monday and it kept me laughing long after I had finished reading it. I note with keen interest your rapturous description of Turkey Run[1] and the picturesque scenery you saw there and when I get back it will be with joy indeed and eager anticipation that I shall join you in a visit there.

Yes, it will certainly be a sensible thing for Art[2] to do if he carries out his plan to buy a house on Long Island and have his afflicted Mother live with him, and I hope to hear of his making that arrangement. I am extremely sorry to hear that dear Emma is not well. Poor Emma! She is such a great heart, such a sweet, noble, loyal sister, and she has certainly had her share of the world's sorrow as well as its happiness. I hope with all my heart there are brighter days ahead for Emma and Dilon.

It is cold and raining here as it has been ever since I came and the papers say there is to be no summer in this section this year.

My love with my heart in it to you and Gertrude and Marguerite

Yours in eternal devotion
Gene

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Turkey Run State Park, some thirty miles north of Terre Haute.
2. Debs's nephew, Arthur Michel, was the son of Debs's sister Louise.

EVD to Carl Sandburg

September 4, 1924
Elmhurst, Illinois

Prison Ode

~

Beyond these walls
Sweet Freedon calls;
In accents clear and brave she speaks,
And lo! my spirit scales the peaks.

~

Beyond these bars
I see the stars;
God's glittering heralds beckon me;
My soul is winged: behold, I'm free!

Eugene V. Debs

Elmhurst, Sept. 4—1924
To Carl, with love and loyalty

Gene

Beatitude

~

Blessed are they who
expect nothing, for they
shall not be disappointed.

Eugene V. Debs

To Carl,
With boundless love and admiration—

Gene

Elmhurst, September 4th 1924

A poems, IU, Sandburg Papers.

EVD to Rosalie Goodyear[1]

September 20, 1924
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Rosalie:

Your precious and heartening message came just in time to greet me on my return from Elmhurst as it was forwarded on receipt there

and followed me home. I went there almost completely spent physically but Nature Cure has restored me in very large measure and with a few more weeks of rest and quiet I shall be ready for service again. I imagine there is still something for me to do and I am certainly going to try my best to do it. There is a wonderful quickening in your precious message and I feel as if I had clasped your hand, looked into your kind eyes and heard the ring of gladness in your voice.

You are so very, very much too appreciative of the little I am and do. But it is a thousand times worth that little for just what your loving message brings to my heart. The lines you quote from dear Horace[2] are so like him and reflect in the fine philosophy they express the beautiful spirit, the clear comprehension and the all-embracing love of one of the world's truly great and immortal souls.

Theodore is putting down these lines for me and in them his love goes with mine, both in heaping measure. You are far too beautiful and fine and majestic of spirit for the age in which you were brought into the world. It is a thousand pities that but a very few can ever really know you. It is perhaps fortunate that they are incapable of realizing their loss. You are fated to suffer much but you hold aloft the inextinguishable torch that lights the way to the stars.

Yours always,
E. V. Debs

TLS, InU, Lilly Library, Curry Papers.

1. Rosalie Goodyear was a New York City writer and poet who corresponded with and sent samples of her work to Debs during and following his imprisonment.
2. Probably Horace Traubel.

EVD to Lilian Steichen Sandburg

October 1, 1924
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Mrs. Sandburg:

How shall I thank you for your very kind and generous rememberance in sending me the many copies of the pictures taken by you of Carl and your sweet children and myself on the occasion of my visit at your home last summer! I am delighted, I need hardly say, with the excellent and most interesting little pictures which will certainly have their proper place in the casket of my precious little treasures. You may certainly flatter yourself that you are an artist as a photographer for in your posings {as} in all else you prove your

high efficiency as a picture-taker as is shown conclusively in the evidence I hold in my hands. Each of the prints you send is an excellent reproduction of the life which had its being in your garden and in the jungles surrounding it when it was my good fortune to be your guest and to be decorated with beautiful roses pressed upon me by the loving hands of your little household gods. Each of the pictures is good and better than good and has its distinct interest and merit. I feel myself highly honored in them all and as I look upon them one by one my heart turns to you in grateful homage for having thus honored me.

Carl shows his usual discriminating taste in expressing preference for the very happy little picture of Helda[1] and myself on the bench. I think you were never more fortunate in snapping your subjects at precisely the right moment. That particular picture is a gem. It could not possibly be better, and it flatters me enormously. Helda's eager, searching and amusing expression and pose is a subject for the best of the movies, and I am sure that Carl never saw anything of its kind to excel it. It is so utterly and so beautifully characteristic of the sweet, innocent child full to overflowing with the spirit and animation of childhood. It requires only a glance to see that she and I are lovers and that we are in delighted and blissful communion with each other. How my emotions are quickened and thrill within me as I recall this happy scene and look once more, as I often shall in the future, into the sweet face, the quizzical eyes of that lovely child!

The pictures of Carl and myself and Margaret and indeed of all three of the little dears are excellent and most precious and interesting to me, as they are also to Katherine and to my brother who have had the pleasure of seeing them.

I shall always remember each happy and comforting moment spent beneath your hospitable roof. The very thought of you and Carl and your trinity of sweet daughters gives me joy.

If my humble companionship helped Carl, as you suggest, in the very least in his work on Lincoln,[2] I shall be forever the subject of enviable distinction.

Thanking you with all my heart and with all loving greetings and the best of good wishes to you and Carl and your three lovely little girls, in which Katherine, Theodore, Gertrude and Marguerite join, I am always,

Yours faithfully,
Eugene V. Debs

TLS, IU, Sandburg Papers.

1. The picture of Helga Sandburg and Debs is reproduced in Helga Sandburg, *A Great and Glorious Romance* (New York, 1978), f.p. 144.

2. Sandburg's six-volume biography of Lincoln, published between 1925 and 1939, received the Pulitzer Prize in 1940.

EVD to Emanuel Haldeman-Julius

October 4, 1924
Terre Haute, Indiana

Dear Haldeman-Julius:

I have been wanting for some time to drop you a line to commend the wonderful work you are doing in the way of sowing the country with high grade literature for the education of the common people, but I have been ill and undergoing treatment at a sanitarium and but recently came back to take up my work again. I left here completely used up as a result of hard campaigning, and it looked for a time as if it were all over with me, it being my fourth experience with nervous exhaustion. But I have been greatly improved by nature cure treatment and with two or three months more of quiet and keeping out of undue excitement I shall be restored entirely and ready for action again.

Your Little Blue Book enterprise is the literary achievement of the age and you are entitled to the heartiest commendation from all people who seek truth, love freedom and stand for justice among men, for the marvellous and gratifying success of your undertaking.

In common with thousands of others I enjoy reading what you write, for it is written with a free hand and as you please, without fear of giving offense where it may chance to interfere with prestige and popularity and the accumulation of dirty dollars.

In the current issue of your Weekly I notice a letter from my good friend Maynard Shipley, who, as usual with him, has something to say worthy of attention. The plan he proposes to counteract the conspiracy of the reactionaries who are in the saddle in California and who are seeking in every way possible to cast their benighting and blighting shadow upon every effort to truly educate the people, that ignorance and superstition may continue to thrive and that its triple-paunched beneficiaries may continue to wax fat in the exploitation and misery of the common herd, is a most excellent one and the movement he is organizing for effective intellectual propaganda should have the energetic support of every freedom-loving person in that state.[1]

California is notoriously the foul nest of the rich and rotten pirates

and profiteers who hold high revel on the Pacific coast and who have corrupted and debauched every institution in the state, especially the courts, to serve their venal and profligate ends. It is only necessary to mention that Tom Mooney and Warren Billings are still in blackhole prison cells there after eight long years of fiendish torture, though the whole world knows they were 'framed' and are absolutely innocent of crime. Further comment is unnecessary. If only the remotest semblance of justice prevailed there the court functionaries themselves would be keeping the lockstep behind prison bars.

Maynard Shipley and his brilliant wife, Miriam De Ford,[2] whose poetic work has given her enviable distinction, are two of the finest and freest souls I know and superbly qualified for the educational work they are undertaking to combat the hypnotizing and debasing {influence} of these predatory powers whose salvation depends upon keeping the masses steeped in ignorance and superstition.

It was a matter of great rejoicing to me as it was to my brother Theodore, and to all of our family in fact, to see you tear the lid from the sepulchre in which these same powers on the Atlantic coast had buried the name and fame of that supreme American poet, George Sylvester Viereck. His genius blazed brilliantly before the American people until the war came, the massacre rather, during which men became beasts and the German next door a degenerate Hun, and then suddenly all the extinguishing power of the criminal war lords was concentrated upon him for George Sylvester Viereck, fearless and erect, maintained inviolate the integrity of his manhood. {He} refused to bow the knee to Wall street. {He} denounced the war on our part as a crime against our people, and must therefore, {he must} be driven into solitude and silence and known no more among the haunts of men.

But you have come to the rescue at just the right time. The {two Little} Blue Books will more than make up for Viereck's previous cowardly publishers and give his inspiring poems, lyrics and ballads wider circulation than they ever had before.[3]

I am very greatly impressed by your boundless ambition, which in most any other would be cause for anxious inquiry among his friends. But you have already achieved what was deemed to be the impossible and you are therefore entitled to vast credibility when it comes to announcing what appears to be the wildest scheme to flood the entire nation with literature and light that will lead to ultimate liberation.

I was especially delighted with your tremendous undertaking to give the whole of Voltaire[4] to the American people. If you can carry out this great plan in its entirety you will do more to banish ignorance and crush superstition in this country than could be done in a thousand

years of ordinary endeavor to accomplish the same end. Voltaire! What a Titan upon the World's vast stage! The American people are densely, pitifully ignorant of him. As a rule they know him only, thanks to their educators (!) and their asinine one hundred percent Americanism, to sneer at him. His towering figure is too tall for them to see above his shoe-tops.

The first book my father ever gave me, some fifty odd years ago, was a copy of Voltaire's Philosophical Dictionary which has been assiduously consulted ever since and still has its place of honor on the book shelves of our home.

You are too busy for long letters. I had not meant to say so much but was carried along by the lively interest I have in your great work of turning on the light and driving superstition in all its deadly forms from the human mind.

Goldberg's[5] {essay on} Mencken {in Life and Letters} was a masterly piece of writing—a classic of critical literature. His work is always unique, brilliant and inspiring.

And now good night, and all greetings and good wishes to you and Mrs. Haldeman-Julius and all of your tribe.

Yours faithfully
Eugene V. Debs

TLS, IU, Chicago Circle, Haldeman-Julius Family Papers.

1. Shipley's article in the July 27, 1924, issue of the *Haldeman-Julius Weekly* described "the anti-evolutionist drive" in California and the efforts of the California branch of the Science League of America, headed by Shipley, to "fight the strangling of science and the invasion of dogmatism" in California's schools.

2. As noted, Maynard Shipley and Miriam Allen Deford (1888-1975) were married in 1921. Among her many books was a biography of Shipley, *Uphill All the Way*, published in 1956.

3. In June 1924, Viereck's *The Three Sphinxes and Other Poems* and *The Haunted House and Other Poems* were published as Nos. 578 and 579 in the Little Blue Book series.

4. Voltaire's works were among the earliest and most frequently published in the Little Blue Book series.

5. Isaac Goldberg (1888-1938) was an author and critic who published biographies of H. L. Mencken, Havelock Ellis, and George Gershwin, among many works, and wrote regularly for the *Haldeman-Julius Weekly* and for *Life and Letters*, a monthly "literary magazine for the masses" that Haldeman-Julius started in 1922.

Ricardo Trevino[1] to EVD

October 6, 1924
Mexico, D.F., Mexico

Dear Mr. Debs:

THE CONFEDERACION REGIONAL OBRERA MEXICANA (The Mexican Federation of Labor), requests the pleasure of your presence at its sixth annual convention, to be held at Ciudad Juarez, State of Chihuahua, (opposite El Paso, Texas) during the week of November 17, 1924.

Following the convention, the Executive Committee and delegates will proceed to Mexico City to witness, on November 30th, the ceremonies attending the inauguration of PLUTARCO ELIAS CALLES[2] as President of the Republic of Mexico, the first Chief Executive of a nation on this continent to be elected by Organized Labor.

We also extend you a cordial invitation to visit Mexico City, as our guest, to participate in this event, so significant to the organized workers of Mexico.

We trust that you will be present and thus help make even stronger the bonds of fraternity and loyalty that now unite the people of Mexico with those of the United States.

SALUD Y REVOLUCION SOCIAL.

For the Executive Committee.
Ricardo Trevino

Address answer:
Senor Ricardo Trevino,
Secretario General,
Confederacion Regional Obrera Mexicana,
3a Belisario Dominguez No. 64,
Mexico, D.F., Mexico.

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. As general secretary of the Mexican Confederation of Labor, Ricardo Trevino organized an international conference of labor leaders and delegates at Ciudad Juárez on November 17, 1924. It was attended by Gompers and other American labor leaders and by delegates from England, Germany, and Canada. *New York Times,* November 18, 1924.

2. General Plutarco Elías Calles (1877-1945) was a leader of the Mexican Revolution, president of Mexico from 1924 to 1928, and a dominant figure in the nation's political history until his death. His term as president witnessed a crisis in Mexican church-state relations that culminated in the closing of churches throughout the republic. *New York Times,* October 20, 1945. Debs's "Pledge of International Solidarity" to Calles (*New York Call,* July 11, 1925) praised him for his policies in opposition to

"Wall Street interests" who "think of the Mexican people only in terms of 'greasers' and as legitimate prey to glut the greed of invading profiteers and spoilsseekers."

Claude G. Bowers to EVD

October 10, 1924
New York City

My Dear Mr Debs:—

It was a delight to get the single line message and the book. I had purchased the book long ago but was glad to have the autographed copy in the form it came. I have read its contents more than once. Most of the poems are more than good but the one in imitation of Kipling's "Danny Devers"[1] is my favorite and I have never been able to read it with dry eyes. There is no special pathos in it to thus move me—it is a sort of pride in the fact that there are men in the world capable of going to prison for a principle and an ideal and of suffering in the cause of the many who are inarticulate.

Some time ago Theodore wrote me that you would send me some letters to some of your friends here if I cared to have them.[2] I have been intending to write for them but have been busy and put it off. At your convenience I should be glad to get them.

Did you ever see such a condition politically? For the first time since I was twenty I am not heart and soul in the fight. Just today—and this is not for publication—I had lunch with a good friend who is the congressman in the Bronx[3] and he tells me that the Democratic polls gives that Democratic stronghold to LaFollette by 30,000 majority. Of fifteen rather close friends of mine here twelve are for LaFollette. The pity is that I cannot see anything but the election of Coolidge which, in my opinion, will be the most disgraceful triumph of an office boy of the interests who is not bright enough for the job of office boy. If it goes to the House I have heard that there is a probability that enough Republicans will go to Davis[4] to elect him to prevent the Senate from electing Bryan.[5] I would much prefer to see Davis defeated. It will be a sad event for my party if it goes to the country that we have won with the aid of the reactionaries.

Happily I have all the politics necessary in my columns and I am devoting myself almost wholly to attacking the Administration—let the benefit go where it may. I am working on my Jefferson-Hamilton book[6] which will be the first honest story of that struggle which was to determine whether this should be a democratic or an aristocratic republic. I wonder if you happen to know anything of the status of

labor from 1790 to 1800. Or where to get it authoratatively. Jefferson fought for the yeomanry, the farmers, who were the greater part of the common herd of that day, but it is not my impression nor has it been my discovery that he gave any thought to the mechanics. It was not wholly to his discredit for there were comparatively few then. I intend to make that point against him however in fairness. Of course Hamilton had a profound contempt for everyone but merchants and bankers and in his Report[7] he gave as one of the advantages of factories that it would make it possible for men to put their wives and children to work. Give my regards to Theodore and Mrs Debs, and believe me,

Always your appreciative friend,
Claude G. Bowers.

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. In *Debs and the Poets,* Douglas Robson's poem "Eugene V. Debs" closed each stanza with the line, "An' we're takin' Debs to prison in the mornin'." In Kipling's "Danny Dever," each stanza closed with the line, "They're hangin' Danny Dever in the mornin'."

2. Bowers left the *Fort Wayne Journal-Gazette* to join the *New York World* in May 1924.

3. Frank Oliver (1883-1968) was the Democratic congressman from the Bronx from 1923 to 1934.

4. John William Davis (1873-1955) was a successful New York lawyer who was nominated for president on the 103d ballot at the Democratic party's national convention in New York in 1924 and badly beaten by the incumbent Calvin Coolidge in the November election.

5. Charles Wayland Bryan (1867-1945) was the younger brother of William Jennings Bryan and was a lifelong power in the Democratic party in Nebraska, where he was elected governor in 1922 and again in 1930 and 1932. Following John W. Davis's presidential nomination at the 1924 Democratic party convention, Bryan accepted the vice-presidential nomination.

6. Bowers's *Jefferson and Hamilton: The Struggle for Democracy in America* was published by Houghton Mifflin in 1925.

7. Hamilton's *Report on Manufacturers* (1791) was a blueprint for the expansion of the nation's business, banking and commercial interests, an expansion viewed by Jefferson and his supporters as threatening to agrarian interests.

EVD to Republican National Committee

October 11, 1924
Chicago, Illinois

Gentlemen:

A copy of your campaign screed "Socialists, Anarchists and I.W.W's Flock to the La Follette Standard"[1] has come into my hands and I

think I ought to return thanks for the compliment paid me in that document,[2] the only compliment your committee is capable of paying an honest man. I should feel myself disgraced indeed to receive any testimonial of approval from the thieving, hypocritical and utterly conscienceless gang you represent. It is true that I was robbed of my citizenship by the political perverts you are seeking to keep in the offices they have befouled, but I still have my manhood and self-respect. I went to prison for a principle, but as you do not know what that is you are excusable for attempting to libel me while yourselves functioning as the servile lackeys of Wall street, the profiteering pirates and highbinders who are looting this nation and debauching its institutions; whose putrescent filthiness was revealed in but the minutest part in the recent uncovering of the stench-pots in Washington, while their diminutive political manikan sat silent and supine in the executive chair once occupied by Lincoln, whose grave clothes have been stolen and whose memory is outraged and insulted by the grafting gang now in control of the Republican party.

If you time-serving adepts in crooked politics were not stone-blind in the practice of your political shell game on your one hundred percent American dupes and morons you would see the hand-writing burning luridly on the wall of your ignominious political fate.

Yours for Socialism,
[Eugene V. Debs]

TLc, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. A copy of the "screed" is in InTI, Debs Collection.
2. The document charged that Robert La Follette's 1924 presidential campaign was "greeted by a rallying to his support of the most incendiary and revolutionary elements in American politics" and that "foremost in the group is Eugene V. Debs."

EVD to Claude G. Bowers

October 13, 1924
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Claude Bowers:

I have received and read with special satisfaction your good letter of the 10th. inst. I am glad the little volume reached you and gave you a bit of pleasure. I knew you already had it but wished you to have an inscribed copy and I need not be told that it fell into sympathetic hands. I think I can understand your emotional reaction to the lines of Douglas Robson in imitation of "Danny Devers."

Before proceeding let me say that Rev. John W. Herring[1] of this city has resigned his pastorate here to enter upon a larger field in New York under the direction of the Federation of Churches. You probably know him or of him. He is the most progressive preacher we have had here for years and a thoroughly fine fellow to boot. He organized the Open Forum in his church and managed it very successfully for several years. He and Dr. Irving Fischer[2] of Yale were visitors at our home last week and we had a pleasant hour together. Dr. Fischer opened the course of lectures in the Open Forum that evening. I took the liberty to give your name to Dr. Herring and he will call on you when he gets settled in New York. He is a young man and a very brilliant and promising one and you and he will find in each other true friends.

Enclosed please find a list of some of my personal friends in New York. You will not need a written introduction to any of them. You have but to mention my name and tell them I wished you to see them and they will be happy to meet and know you and serve you in any way they can. You can reach nearly all of them over the phone.

You and Mrs. Bowers would find Helen Gardner[3] a charming woman. She and her daughter Helene live together. They are warm personal friends of ours and if you will simply mention Theodore or myself they will give you a cordial reception and you will find them fine souls and very entertaining.

Dykaar[4] is a noted sculptor of whom you no doubt know. He has modeled nearly all the big men in and about Washington and New York. I was introduced to him through Mrs. Champ Clark and he came here and made a wonderful portrait of mine.

Rosalie Goodyear is a brilliant poet of the modern type. She was an intimate friend of Horace Traubel, biographer and literary executor of Walt Whitman. She is a rarely gifted young woman and a high-souled artist and idealist.

Do you know Louis Untermeyer, the poet, and have you read his book on modern American poets and poetry, a very interesting and illuminating volume? If not I hope you will find time to see him personally and to get his book. I know how much you will find in it to interest you. He is a fine fellow and you and he will at once like each other. But you perhaps already know him as you probably do others on the list. Be sure to see Rev. John Haynes Holmes when you have a chance.

Willy Pogany[5] is a celebrated Italian artist. He and Leo Sarkadia[6] occupy the same studio at 1947 Broadway. A visit there will be well worth your while. You will see a studio there with art evidences and an atmosphere after your own heart.

Peggy Wood is the daughter of the late Eugene Wood,[7] writer, author and novelist, a brilliant young woman in every way worthy of her distinguished sire.

Now as to your inquiry in regard to the status of labor from 1790 to 1800 in relation to the historic work you have in course of preparation. Call at the Rand School, 7 E. 15th. st. and see James Oneal, Editor of the New Leader,[8] and author of "The Workers in American History." This little volume will give you information such as you would not find in any ordinary history. In Jefferson's time working people, white as well as black, were chattels. They had no vote, being disfranchised by property qualifications. Their wage was a beggarly pittance and in some states they were legally forbidden to ask for an advance. When their wage was insufficient to support them and their family or they were out of work and forced into debt they were thrown into the debtor's dungeon and McMaster[9] can tell you what an incredibly foul and pestilential hole that was, where the victims of both sexes literally rotted to death. This is not written in our school histories for a very good reason. As a matter of fact historians have never written about labor at all, deeming it negligible and unimportant. They have served the ruling class in which they had their associations and their business consisted mainly in glorifying kings, tyrants, potentates, military murderers, high priests etc. No wonder Ingersoll said "History contains in the main what never happened." You remember Hegel's generalization: "We learn nothing from history except that we learn nothing from history."

I think you know "Jim" Oneal. He used to live here. He has made a special study of labor in the Colonial period and in the early years of the republic. Please call for Solon DeLeon[10] also at the Rand School. He is the son of the late Daniel DeLeon author and translator of Sue's monumental work on "The History of a Proletarian Family Across the Ages." This series contains "The Silver Cross" the best short story of Jesus Christ ever written; a perfect little gem of beautiful classical literature, DeLeon is {labor} statistician for the Rand School and has charge of the Labor Research Department. He is thoroughly trained and efficient and is loaded with data and information about labor here and abroad, in ancient as well as modern times. Ask him to let you see his American Labor Year Book for 1923-24 containing over 500 pages of classified and indexed matter covering every phase of labor and the labor movement in this country.

You will be interested in the Rand School. It is a unique institution that will impress you. Have them show you through. They will do it with pleasure. Just mention my name and I will assure you a cordial

welcome for they have long been warm personal friends. At this School please call for

James Oneal, Editor of New Leader,
Ryan Walker, Cartoonist for New Leader,
Bertha Mailly, Manager Rand School,
Algernon Lee and his wife, Instructors,
Scott Nearing and his wife, Instructors,
Solon De Leon, Labor Statistician.

There is more I ought to say in answer to your fine letter but I have already covered too many pages. By the way, do you know Carl Sandburg the very brilliant and promising western poet who has been called the second Whitman but who says that he would rather be the first Sandburg than the second anybody? He and his beautiful family live at Elmhurst where I spent all of last summer at a sanitarium to keep from crossing the range. I spent much time with Carl and his family. He and Sinclair Lewis are boon companions. The latter came out there for a visit and we had a fine time together. I like Lewis immensely. He is going to do a very big thing with and for labor in the course of his career. He has been carrying it for a long time and it will probably be a long time more before it will be ready, but it is growing and will come in due time.

Sandburg is writing a Lincoln that will be utterly unlike any other book on Lincoln ever written. It will be in his own unique fashion and will give the American people the true Lincoln with the mud on his boots as well as the love in his heart and the vision in his soul. He has been working at it over two years and it will soon be ready now for the publishers. He has dug up ancient and musty documents with stories in them never told before. Carl with his Lincoln and you with your Jefferson would spend a marvellous evening together. I'd love to be the audience.

Theodore is writing this for me and wishes to say that he fully appreciates your kind remembrance. And so does also Mrs. Debs who on reading your letter at once recalled your beautiful story you wrote about us at a time when the press had us buried in a grave dug by a conspiracy of silence in which you wrote of her sewing machine and my desk in the same room,—a story the recollection of which still warms our hearts.

Mrs. Debs and Theodore and his wife join in greetings of affection and in every good wish for you and Mrs. Bowers and your precious Patricia—a beautiful little girl with a beautiful name.

Yours always,
Eugene V. Debs

NEW YORK

Abbott Leonard D. Editorial Staff Current Opinion, 50 W. 47th. st.
Bynner Witter[11] Poet, 16 Gramercy Park
Dreiser Theodore Novelist, 16 St. Luke's Place
Dykaar Moses W. Sculptor, Room 52, 96 Fifth ave.
Gardner Helen L. Movie Star, 127 Mac Dougal st.
Goodyear Rosalie Care W. Clarke, 444 W. 20th. st. (Poet)
Gordon John J.[12] Writer on N.Y. Times, 8650—19th. ave. Brooklyn
Holmes Rev. John Haynes, Greatest preacher in N.Y., 12 Park ave.
Hossain Synd[13] Editor New Orient, 12 Fifth ave.
Keller Helen 25 Seminole ave., Forest Hills, L.I.
Karsner David Writer on Tribune, 579 Ft. Washington ave.
Mayer Louis Sculptor, 253 W. 42nd. st.,
Magnus Rabbi J.L.[14] 114 Fifth ave.
Mosson Isadore[15] Merchant, 316 W. 93rd, st.
Pogany Willy Portrait Painter & Artist, 1947 Broadway
Stone Melville E.[16] Ex-Manager Asso. Press, 120 E. 75th. st.
Sarkadia Leo 1947 Broadway, (Artist)
Watson Blanche[17] Writer, 40 Gramercy Park
Wood Peggy Writer, 105 E. 19th. st.

P.S. I know that your time is mortgaged in advance, every moment, and so I wish to say that no answer to this letter is needed or expected unless there is something more you wish [to] inquire about. I forgot to say that I have not the personal address of Louis Untermeyer but you can locate him by inquiry at the Rand School or through the telephone directory.

TLS, InU, Lilly Library, Bowers Manuscripts.

1. John W. Herring was a personal friend of Debs and pastor of First Congregational Church in Terre Haute. His "Reminiscence" of Debs appeared in *Unity*, December 6, 1926.

2. Irving Fisher (1867-1946) was an internationally known economist at Yale from 1890 until his retirement in 1935, the author of many widely read books on economics, and an activist in a wide range of reform movements. At various times Fisher was president of the American Economics Association, the National Institute of Social Sciences, the Eugenics Research Association, and the American Statistical Association.

3. Helen Louise Gardner (d. 1968) was a popular silent-film star and the first film star to form her own company, Helen Gardner Picture Corporation (1912).

4. As noted, Moses Dykaar (1885-1933) did a bust of Debs in Terre Haute shortly after Debs's return from prison. Before his death by suicide in 1933, he had done busts of Calvin Coolidge, Charles Evans Hughes, John J. Pershing, Samuel Gompers and many other prominent figures. *New York Times*, March 11, 1933.

5. Willy Pogany (1882-1955) was born in Hungary and came to the United States in 1914. He became one of the leading artists and designers of his time and was noted

for his designs for Broadway plays and for his portraits of leading figures in the entertainment world and of socially prominent women. In 1920, Pogany painted the Debs murals at the Rand School. *New York Call,* November 24, 1920; *New York Times,* July 31, 1955.

6. Leo Sarkadi (1879-1947) was born in Hungary, came to the United States during World War I, and for many years served as manager for Willy Pogany. In his own right, Sarkadi won favorable recognition as a novelist, playwright, and Neo-Impressionist painter. *New York Times,* March 27, 1947.

7. Peggy Wood (1892-1978) was a star of American stage, screen, and television for sixty years, her roles ranging from musical comedy to serious drama to television situation comedy. She was perhaps best known for her role as the witty mother of a Norwegian family in the long-playing television series "Mama." Her father, Eugene Wood (1860-1923), was the author of popular short stories based on his knowledge of small-town life in his native Ohio. *New York Times,* March 19, 1978; February 26, 1923.

8. The daily *New York Call* became the weekly *New Leader* in January 1924. Debs, "Long Life to the New Leader," *New Leader,* January 19, 1924.

9. John Bach McMaster (1852-1932) was professor of history at the University of Pennsylvania from 1883 until his retirement in 1920. His major work, the eight-volume *History of the People of the United States* (1883-1913), pioneered in emphasizing the social and economic forces that shaped the course of events, and his textbooks for primary and secondary schools were widely popular throughout the United States.

10. Solon De Leon (1883-1975) was associate editor of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers Union publication *Advance* and director of labor research at the Rand School. He edited and published *American Labor Who's Who* (1925) and the *American Labor Year Book. New York Times,* December 18, 1975.

11. Witter Bynner (1882-1968) was a poet and playwright and journalist who eventually was known chiefly for his translations of Chinese and American Indian poetry. A number of Debs's letters to and from Bynner are in InTI, Debs Collection. *New York Times,* June 3, 1968.

12. John J. Gordon (1866-1956) joined the *New York Times* in 1907 and retired at seventy-five as "the newspaper's oldest police reporter," having covered most of the city's major crimes and disasters for nearly forty years. *New York Times,* July 9, 1956.

13. Synd Hossain (1884-1949) was an Indian nationalist and Gandhi supporter who lectured in the United States in the 1920s, championing the cause of independence for his native land. In 1948 he was named India's first ambassador to Egypt and was serving in that position at the time of his death. *New York Times,* February 26, 1949.

14. Judah Leon Magnes (1877-1948) served as rabbi for a number of congregations in New York City before World War I and was active in Jewish ecumenical and relief activities both before and after the war. He left the United States for Palestine in 1922 and spent most of the rest of his life there and in 1925 founded Hebrew University in Jerusalem, which he served as chancellor from 1925 to 1935 and as president thereafter. Magnes's letters to Debs, dated April 17 and May 31, 1918, are in InTI, Debs Collection. Magnes wrote "Debs America's Only Saint" for *Debs Freedom Monthly,* November 1921.

15. In a letter to Theodore Debs, April 19, 1924, Mosson's letterhead identifies him as the proprietor of "Mosson Brothers Hardwoods Lumber and Softwoods" in Brooklyn. InTI, Debs Collection.

16. Melville Elijah Stone (1848-1929) described his long career in journalism and as head of the Associated Press in *Fifty Years a Journalist* (1921).

17. A frequent correspondent and close friend of both Theodore and Eugene

Debs, Blanche Watson was a free-lance writer whose articles, often on Gandhi, appeared in the *New York Times, Freeman, World Tomorrow,* and other publications.

EVD to Carl Sandburg

October 21, 1924
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Carl:

If there was a lonesome spot in your doorway when I left[1] there there was also one in my heart and I can feel it yet. I shall never forget those jeweled moments and those golden hours. I note what you say about the book that is coming and I shall be happy indeed to see it. It is going to be a very big book. As much of its illustrious subject as can be put into a book will be packed in its pages along with as much of the famous {author} as the book will hold. Yes, I will take care of myself and so must you for we shall be needed, both of us, for the big job ahead. My love to you all!

Yours always,
Eugene V. Debs

TLS, IU, Sandburg Papers.

1. In a note to Debs on October 18, 1924, Sandburg wrote: "If you hadn't stayed so long you wouldn't have left such a big lonesome spot. We can nearly see a ghost in the doorways where you came in and went out." He added: "When the book—in which you have collaborated—comes out next year a copy will go to you." Eugene V. Debs Foundation, Debs Home.

Bertha Hale White to EVD

October 22, 1924
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Comrade Gene:

The enclosed clipping appeared in today's issue of the Daily Worker, and refers to the reported meeting in Milwaukee.[1]

It is a fine example of the distortion of the Communists. When I think of the eager discussion in the National Campaign Committee, the excitement of poor Comrade Coleman[2] when it appeared possible that a meeting of yours might be arranged before election, I could rage if it did not make me so sad.

So far from not wanting a meeting, they said every cent of proceeds should go to the National Office—all they asked was to have you there for the meeting. Coleman said: "Good Lord—we could fill the auditorium to the roof if you would give us just a half chance to advertise." Knowing their real feelings, their keen disappointment, when I asked them to forget their plans centered upon your presence, I admired their fine attitude.

Since you command it, I shall permit Kirk[3] to rise from the dust and graciously absolve him. Of course I know I should have forgotten all the things which seem important at a distance.

Now and then I seem to catch a gleam in that man's eye—the gleam of a rebel's eye. He may rise from that afore-mentioned dust—running! And the Empress may need her throne to hide behind if he does. But sufficient unto the day is the tyranny thereof. I'll keep him under subjection as long as I can.

Comrade Hillquit will be happy and relieved to know his so necessary amendment is approved by you.[4]

Always faithfully,
Bertha

Abas—also nix—on vacations!

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. The October 22, 1924, issue of the *Daily Worker* carried a story that claimed that "the socialist party of Milwaukee did not want to organize a lecture for Debs in Milwaukee," that Debs was forced to speak there "under the auspices of the Milwaukee Forum, a privately owned institution," and that the Milwaukee socialists were "now afraid of Debs' revolutionary phraseology."

2. William Coleman (1878-1933) was a member of the Socialist party's national executive committee from Wisconsin and state secretary of the party there. He had served as a socialist Milwaukee alderman from 1910 to 1914 and 1916 to 1922 and received 71,104 votes as the party's candidate for governor in 1920. Coleman served two terms (1925-29) as a socialist member of the Wisconsin state legislature. *American Appeal,* May 14, 1927; *Milwaukee Journal,* August 29, 1933.

3. Probably George Kirkpatrick, who was serving as national publicity director and editor of the *Socialist World* at the national office in Chicago.

4. At the national executive committee's meeting in Chicago on October 16, 1924, Debs's motion that the committee hold its next meeting on November 8, 1924, was amended by Morris Hillquit to call for the meeting to be held on November 30 in Washington, since "the situation created by the election results will be clearer on that date than on the 8th." *Socialist World,* November 24, 1924.

Mary Donovan[1] to Theodore Debs

November 14, 1924
Boston, Massachusetts

Dear Comrade Debs:

Your letter of Nov. 4th reached me only today. On Monday I wrote asking for a word from Comrade Eugene Debs for our meeting on Sunday the 16th instant. Your letter had not reached us at that time, so you will pardon my insistence upon a statement from him.

Accept the sincere good wishes of the entire Committee for the recovery to full strength of Comrade Debs and our sincere appreciation of your letter, as well as of the work done in the past years in a way that no one except Eugene Debs can do it.

Would it be possible at this time to give us any idea of the month in which we could hope for a meeting? We know your interest in the case and you know what difficulties are before us, so I may close with this—we need Comrade Debs and when he is able, we feel sure he will come. May it be soon.[2]

Fraternally yours,
SACCO-VANZETTI DEFENSE COMMITTEE
Mary Donovan
Secretary.

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Mary Donovan Hapgood (1886-1973) was excommunicated by the Roman Catholic church for her refusal to resign from the Inter-collegiate Socialist Society at the University of Michigan, from which she graduated in 1912. Donovan (who married Powers Hapgood in 1927 and named her daughter Barta after Bartolomeo Vanzetti) joined the Socialist party in 1911 and devoted a long career to the service of workers' causes as a Massachusetts state factory inspector, as a leading figure in the Sacco-Vanzetti defense, as an organizer for the AFL (and later the CIO), and as a tireless writer for labor, peace, and antifascist publications. Donovan served as recording secretary of the Sacco-Vanzetti Defense Committee from 1924 to 1927, delivered the eulogy at the funeral for Sacco and Vanzetti, and was arrested and sentenced to a year in prison for placing a placard critical of Judge Thayer on their caskets. In 1928, Hapgood was the Socialist party candidate for governor of Massachusetts. *Indianapolis News,* June 27, 1973.

2. As noted, after his release from prison Debs wrote frequently on the Sacco-Vanzetti case and in 1926 published a widely distributed pamphlet, *Sacco and Vanzetti: An Appeal to American Labor.* In a speech at a Sacco-Vanzetti rally in Boston in May 1925, Debs declared that "Sacco and Vanzetti are not guilty and on that I would stake my life." If they were "Republicans or Democrats, Rotarians or Kiwanians, they would not now be in prison, facing death." *St. Louis Labor,* May 25, 1925. A "message of cheer from Debs through his brother Theodore" was sent to the Sacco-Vanzetti Defense Committee in November 1924. *Miami Valley Socialist,* December 19, 1924.

EVD to David Karsner

December 6, 1924
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear "Davy":—

I have finished reading your letter of the 1st. with the feeling that the game of life had its galling inning at the moment it was written. I am grieved but not at all surprised. At your age, in your years of boyhood no such shadows should fall upon the heart as I feel are troubling yours. I think I can sense the situation at a glance. Knowing how delicately you are wired, how keenly sensitive you are to a surrounding that jars on your moral and spiritual nerves, I feel convinced that the atmosphere of a big capitalist daily,[1] permeated in every fibre with commercialism, is not at all compatible or rather reconcilable with your temperament or conducive to your happiness. But it may be that just this experience is a part and a necessary part of the ampler and completer education and equipment you must have to do the greater work awaiting you and to fulfill your higher destiny. That you will learn things in such a position you never could or would learn in one perfectly congenial to you and your taste goes without saying, and it is one of the every day facts of life that we profit most in every essential way by adverse and disagreeable experiences than by the more pleasing and happy ones.

Yes, dear David, you are right in your philosophizing about apartment cages with a synagogue at one end and a graveyard at the other to look out upon for good cheer and serene meditation. Every damned thing about you is mechanical and artificial, hard and cold and automatic, so that all you have to do is to press a button or touch a lever to have things dance attendance upon you and to finally consign you to a self-acting coffin in which you are rolled {away} into the great mystery. I often fondly yearn to see once more and to once more live in the enchanting little village on the {river} bank, shaded by the great sycamores, in which I was born, but which has now been swallowed up and utterly buried in a wilderness of concrete and steel, a commercial metropolis as cold and callous as the arctics and in which my beloved little community of Terre Haute, where all were neighbors and all friends, and where there was green grass instead of gray concrete and sturdy oaks and beautiful maples instead of hideous steel prison walls, {is now but a memory.} Our good friend Ingersoll used to say: "Oaks and elms are infinitely more beautiful and eloquent than spires and chimneys."

My heart is touched as you recall the intensely dramatic and pathetic

scene as I left the prison. No pen, however inspired, could ever do it justice, and least of all my own. When I have tried to set down what my heart overflowed with I found myself mute and silent and my hand palsied. What would I not give were it in my power to paint in words or on canvas that vivid, unparallelled, bewildering and overwhelming demonstration of almost three thousand so-called convicts, human souls in cruel iron fetters, in the presence of which the warden and deputy warden stood paralyzed and speechless and I, standing between them, trembling with emotions that almost choked me while my heart stood still and the tears ran down my cheeks! Ah, dear David, that vivid, eternally memorable and heart-wringing scene, those pallid faces in all shades and representing all races and all ages, and all bearing the tragic stamp of "man's inhumanity to man," will never be written in any book unless it be in God's own book of record and remembrance.

But in my very humble way I am going to do my best and I am going to wage war in every way I know how on the god-damned prison institution everywhere, as I pledged myself on leaving Atlanta I would do, while there is a breath of life in my body.

Cheer up, David, it is a great and glorious battle after all and the greater the odds, adversities, griefs and sorrows, the more valiantly will we fight, the more unconquerable in spirit will we become, and the fuller and richer, the nobler and diviner will life be to us.

Theodore and Gertrude and Kate and I all join, and Marguerite would be with us heartily were she not far away, in love and all happy greetings and fond wishes to you and your dear Esther and sweet Walta.[2]

Yours always and
Eugene V. Debs

TLS, NN Kars.

1. After leaving the *New York Call,* Karsner joined the staff of the *New York Tribune.*
2. Karsner's second wife, Esther, and his daughter, Walta Whitman Karsner.

EVD to J. S. Woodsworth[1]

December 22, 1924
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Comrade Woodsworth:

It was fortunate for me, as I see by your good letter of the 17th. inst. just received,[2] that you met our mutual friend and comrade,

E.G. Hill of Guelph. Comrade Hill[3] has for many years been so faithful in his devotion to my brother and myself, so kind to us in so many ways, and is withal such a fine, loyal and lovable soul that we have long since incorporated him into our family. It was very kind in you after meeting Comrade Hill to "stretch your hand across the borders" and extend the greeting which so warms my heart and is so cordially reciprocated. You are very complimentary in what you have to say in regard to my being so well known in Canada and to the reception that would be accorded me. I cannot imagine what I have ever done to merit such enviable distinction, and I must attribute my good fortune in that regard to a very generous and whole-hearted recognition of yourself and the comrades of my humble services in the cause of labor. It has been long since I have toured Canada speaking for socialism and I hope I may again have that pleasure in the not too distant future. I have been long ill from nervous exhaustion but I am now very much improved and in time shall be quite restored and ready to take up my work again.

Hearty congratulations to you upon the success of your own efforts in behalf of the working class as evidenced by the pamphlet entitled "The King vs. J.S. Woodsworth" and the article from the Daily Star enclosed in your letter which I am taking home with me for a more careful reading by the evening light. When the powers that be accuse you of sedition and of seditious words and libel it is proof positive that you have spoken without fear of favor, that your barbed shafts went home and that you did your work well.[4] More power to you, dear comrade, in the service of the cause and may you have length of years to round out your task and to realize in some measure at least the dreams and hopes, the ideals and aspirations that sustain you in every hour of trial in the struggle to achieve industrial freedom and to make this a saner, sweeter and more beautiful world for all of mankind.

With the greetings of the season and all good wishes to you and yours for the future, in which my brother Theodore and all of our united household join heartily, I have great pleasure in subscribing myself,

Yours fraternally,
Eugene V. Debs

TLS, CaOOA.

1. James Shaver Woodsworth (1874-1942) served as a Methodist minister in various Winnipeg churches and as secretary of the Canadian Welfare League before World War I and was imprisoned for a short time for seditious libel during a strike in Winnipeg in 1919. In 1921, Woodsworth was elected as a labor member of the

Canadian Parliament and held the seat until his death. He was a founder in 1932 of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation.

2. In Woodsworth's letter to Debs, December 17, 1924, Woodsworth told of meeting "a great admirer of yours—E.G. Hill of Guelph," called Debs "a great inspiration to many in this country," and assured him that he would be "overjoyed" if Debs could visit Ottawa. InTI, Debs Collection.

3. See Edward G. Hill to EVD, April 27, 1920; October 3, 1921. InTI, Debs Collection.

4. The seditious libel charges against Woodsworth were based in part on his quotation from the Book of Isaiah 65:21, 22. "And they shall build houses and inhabit them; and they shall . . . not plant and another eat," a selection that led the authorities to believe that "he was talking Bolshevism." *New Day*, February 25, 1922.

Isaac Goldberg to EVD

December 28, 1924
Roxbury, Massachusetts

Dear Comrade Debs:

I hope that you will not attribute my delayed answer to ungratefulness. Your generous letter,—far too generous, I am afraid,—will remain among a few keepsakes of a youth in which you were one of the all-too-rare inspirations.

To me, your political significance has always been secondary to your overflowing humanness. That, indeed, was how I always regarded the Socialist party, to which at the outset of my college career I sacrificed my academic future. On that score I have no regrets. A Debs here, a Havelock Ellis[1] there,—these redeem, almost, the blinded race.

Please receive, for yourself and surrounding family, my sincerest wishes for years of strength and leadership.

Cordially yours,
Isaac Goldberg

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Goldberg's biography of Havelock Ellis (1859-1939), internationally renowned pioneer in the study of the psychology of sex, was published in 1926.

EVD to Ralph and Edith Chaplin

January 5, 1925
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Ralph and Edith:

Please forbear with my seeming remissness. I know you will not believe it intentional. Ever since the holidays set in we have been deluged with letters and messages of all kinds from almost everywhere, and it has been simply impossible with our limited office facilities to keep up with them. I only want to say at this moment what I dared not put off longer and that is that the wonderful picture[1] came in perfect order and gave me inexpressible delight. Even you would find it difficult to imagine how my heart leapt as the unpacking disclosed the heroic features of the immortal old rebel. In a day or two, or as soon as I can find time, I will write you more about the picture, the beautiful, fascinating portrait of the martyr-soul whose fearless eyes look steadily down into mine from our library wall. It is a priceless treasure and made thrice so coming through your creative art, imbued with the same spirit that enabled him to stand alone against a gain-saying world and gave his name to eternal glory, and from your good hands. I have a button from the old warrior's overcoat and the candle-stick that was with him in the engine-house. I personally knew Hinton,[2] one of Brown's men, author of "John Brown and his Men." He was not among the 21 who went to the Ferry.

I will write you in detail soon as I can get around to it. I have often, very often, thought and doted on the perfectly lovely visit we had at your paradisaical cottage. You are indeed comrades after my own heart. Wish you and the Sandburgs could see each other oftener. You are indeed the royal family.

Yours always
E. V. Debs

TLS, MiU, Labadie Collection.

1. In his letter to Debs, December 21, 1924, Chaplin enclosed a picture of John Brown, whom Debs revered throughout his life. See Debs, "John Brown," *St. Louis Labor,* December 28, 1907.

2. Richard Josiah Hinton (1830-1901) published a sympathetic biography of Brown in 1894. A native of England, Hinton came to the United States before the Civil War, joined the abolitionist movement, served as a bodyguard for Wendell Phillips, and joined John Brown's forces in "Bloody Kansas." Richard J. Hinton, *John Brown and His Men* (*New York Times* edition, 1968), introduction.

George R. Kirkpatrick to EVD

January 10, 1925
Chicago, Illinois

My dear Gene,

I must tell you something I did not tell you in my letter of warning recently mailed. Here it is: Your article for the Socialist World[1] is just splendid. Correct. Perfect. I am forever becoming prouder of you. This article makes me still more prideful in you. Bless your clear vision, your clear-writing and your perfect courage.

I refer to "The American Labor party" in the paragraph above.

It was not a bit of my purpose, when I set out on this letter, to ask you to do a favor. But it occurs to me now to do so. It has been in my mind to ask this, and as it comes now 'to mind' I make bold to include the request in this letter.

All along the line we should, of course, be doing what we can to bring new blood into our movement, to encourage the youth looking our way and very specially encourage those already on the job promoting the Young People's Socialist League.

You and I would scarcely debate that point at all.

I hope to make the February issue of the World carry some special stuff for the Y.P.S.L. Oneal has sent me an article—a salutation, very suitable. In the rush to get sufficient copy to our printers last evening I had to run it, tho I was holding it for next month. The printers having assured me they had enough and much more than enough, informed me last evening that they lacked twenty-five percent of enough!!!! That broke up my plans a good deal. Your having done so much for us and having just sent the beautiful article on the American Labor party made me hesitate—and put off—asking you for a few paragraphs on this subject. But here I am, dear Gene.

Now, if you will send 100 or 200 or 300 words, or a short single sentence on or to the Y.P.S.L. I shall be happy indeed,—and grateful.[2] I dread to ask this of you. It shames me to do so. But you are the greatest combination of red-blooded youth, virile maturity and far-visioned prophecy in all the world, and I can't resist the temptation to ask you for a word.

I am actually ashamed to do this.

You will understand, however.

Here's to Theodore's brother and to the brother's brother.

If I were in your office a bit this morning we {three} would send out a three-ply curse upon the Child Labor Morons,[3] the malignant wicked vicious band of shameless devils that they are. I am sure you

would beat me to the most fitting phrases but, but—well, I would be Johnny on the job with the sincerity in my wish to smite the detestable cannibals.[4]

How much I should like to be there in the office even for a moment. It would be a high privilege. There is no finer place in this land for inspiration and love and courage and every splendid emotion that a man needs in this world at this time,—than that dear office where the two big tall brothers work and feel and flash forth the messages so important in this land. I love to think of the times I have been there. I surely do. It seems truly wonderful to me to have been welcomed there.

What a sacred place it is, truly, dear comrades. I can not tell you what I feel when I think of that office with the two great, unaffected, firey, gentle men of power who work on and on year after year—there in that office. I feel honored to have ever set foot inside of it. I surely do. And to have been made beautifully welcome!!

How much I love you both. And how dear your sweethearts seem to be, the blessed women who welcome you home at night. Do please give them a greeting from me in phrase more fitting than I can use.

I often think of the long-time editor of the Outlook, {Dr. Lyman Abbott} who was, for a long time, preacher in Terre Haute,[5] a man of splendid mind, much honored thruout the academic world, {a} really brilliant in mentality, eager to be courageous and function in Christ-like fashion, I mean in Christlike fearlessness—but he couldn't make the grade. Poor devil. How much more has gone out of that office of yours than he ever sent forth tho he had splendid agencies to serve him with any message he would send. How, infinitely more of the real stuff that makes mankind move on has flowed out from that modest office of yours.

Really I must not presume to write more.

But you two are so strangely wholesome in your large sincerity, your blessed fraternalism, in your charm to stimulate the rest of us. One of the things you have to suffer is long-drawn-out letters from some of us, from a lot of us, when we get started.

Right now I can see you, the pair of you; and it is fine to see you. I see you at the desk or moving about.

Just think of it—I set out to tell you how much I like the article! Well, I feel a lot better for having been a few minutes with you there in the office.

Yours "without a flicker,"
Kirkpatrick

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. In "The American Labor party," *Socialist World,* January 1925, Debs predicted that "the progressive tendencies in American politics . . . will inevitably lead to and result in the formation of an American Labor party. When? I do not know. I hope soon."

2. Debs's article on the Young People's Socialist League, "New Blood Is Wanted," appeared in *Socialist World,* February 1925.

3. The proposed child-labor amendment to the Constitution, which was being considered by the state legislatures, failed of adoption in the requisite number in January 1925. *New York Call,* January 31, 1925.

4. Kirkpatrick's "Child Labor Amendment" appeared in the *Miami Valley Socialist,* December 19, 1924.

5. Lyman Abbott was pastor of the Congregational Church in Terre Haute from 1860 to 1865.

Paul Hanna[1] to EVD

January 16, 1925
New York City

My dear Eugene Debs:—

I wish I could say something that would let you know how much I feel indebted for your precious note about myself and The New Leader. Nothing but those lines from you could fully complete my sense of home-coming to Labor and Socialist journalism.

The field for a Socialist paper, good natured but with strong convictions, was never so big and wide open in our country as it is today. Just the same, it will require time, hard work and the fullest cooperation from all the friends of our cause to give The New Leader its real stamp, and fix it in the esteem of a big public as the organ of liberty, labor and democratic progress.

There are hundreds of writers and artists who at present have no place to go with their facts and ideas, and I want in time to reach them all and make them feel that The New Leader is their home. I want to develop the department in which letters to the editor are printed, and to make readers use it more and more to say what they think about our movement and the world they live in.

If you have time to examine the display editorial in the January 17 number[2] you will find there one of the objects in which I am especially interested. It is to have our labor and Socialist comrades overcome their "inferiority complex," and more and more to assume the offensive by identifying the rights of labor with American rights. How can we let ourselves be put always on the defensive, always branded as "un-Americans" with "alien" ideas, always apologetic?

(Your long and matchless record has of course always been free from that tendency.)

American labor has always been exploited, heaven knows; but American labor in the past, and historically, never had a bottom-dog psychology. It THOUGHT it was America, even while it was being robbed and deceived. That was a very precious thought. It carried with it a morale that was priceless, and which would make our movement very formidable indeed if it could be regained. Let us recover that fine old morale. Let US speak in the name of America when we say what labor wants and is entitled to have.

If you agree with this thought, my dear Eugene, won't you try to write a piece for The New Leader[3] that will bring out the point, as only you could bring it out? Our traditions are really the traditions of a nation of toilers, sweating together to earn their bread, looking upon each other as equals, and upon America as THEIR country—a country that had no mean quarrel with any other people and which looked with sympathetic eyes upon the struggle of other peoples to escape from tyranny.

Pardon me for making this letter so long. And I had no thought when I began of asking anything from you except the fine encouragement that you had already given . . . Above I set down only a fragment of the message I want to spread among all our people—writers, readers and the millions we have never yet reached. I do so want them to STAND UP, not as a menace to society, not as a mob ready to destroy, but as THE REAL AMERICAN PEOPLE that they are, men and women determined to fulfill their birthright to have such institutions as THEY shall create and approve.

Jim Oneal was not in the office today. But I will show him your letter tomorrow and I know he will be pleased.

My wife, who was Rosa Laddon[4] and knew you better than I in the old days of the Rand School, joins me in affectionate greetings to yourself and all your family.

Sincerely and fraternally,
Paul Hanna

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Paul Hanna (1882-1925) worked on a number of newspapers, including the *Washington Herald* and the *Philadelphia Evening Telegram*, before becoming a Washington correspondent for the Federated Press and *New York Call*. He died suddenly and unexpectedly on February 24, 1925, only a few months after becoming managing editor of the *New Leader*. *Socialist World*, April 1925.

2. In "For Liberty and Labor," *New Leader*, January 17, 1925, Hanna set down the "principles to guide the New Leader" in its coverage of "labor, democracy, and politics."

3. Two Debs articles appeared in the *New Leader* soon after Hanna's letter to Debs: "The Daily of Tomorrow" (January 24, 1925) and "A Program of Action for the Socialist Party" (February 21, 1925).

4. Rosa Laddon was a staff correspondent for the Federated Press and the author of a series of articles on the American Legion's efforts to dictate the content of history textbooks for use in the public schools. *Miami Valley Socialist*, January 11, 1924.

Roger N. Baldwin to EVD

January 17, 1925
New York City

Dear Gene Debs:

Thanks for sending me the Terre Haute paper.[1] I do not often answer attacks, but this is too good a chance to take a crack at these fellows. I have not done it in your ringing style, but possibly restraint may be quite as effective with them.

Yours with affectionate greetings,
Roger Baldwin

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. The *Terre Haute Post*, December 27, 1924, published a letter from the commander of the local American Legion post condemning Baldwin's appearance at the Congregational Church Open Forum on Armistice Day in 1924. Baldwin's letter in response to the American Legion attack, in which he told the post commander that "you cannot reconcile loyalty to the Constitution with your request to the Open Forum to censor its speakers," was printed in the *Post* on February 12, 1925.

EVD to Everett Sanders

January 19, 1925
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Mr. Sanders:

Allow me to congratulate you upon the favor you are finding and the popularity you are achieving in public life.[1] Politically you and I are at opposite sides but personally I wish you all the good in the world.

Yours very truly,
Eugene V. Debs

TLS, DLC, Sanders Papers.

1. As noted, Sanders defeated Debs in the 1916 congressional campaign in Indiana's Fifth District and served in Congress until 1925. He declined to seek reelection in 1924, served as head of the speakers' bureau for the Republican national committee during the 1924 campaign, and became Coolidge's secretary in March 1925.

Everett Sanders to EVD

January 23, 1925
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Debs:

Your good letter of congratulations has reached me. It was very thoughtful and kind of you to send me this message, and I sincerely thank you.

I have always prized very highly your friendship. This arises not only from our meetings, but also from my close association with your nephew, Bob Heinl,[1] who has in a thousand ways been most helpful to me. He is a delightful companion.

With every good wish, I am

Very cordially yours,
[Everett Sanders]

TLc, DLC, Sanders Papers.

1. Robert Debs Heinl (1880-1950) was Debs's nephew, the son of John G. and Mary Heinl. He worked for newspapers in New York and Washington and for *Leslie's Weekly* before World War I, was publicity director for the Emergency Fleet Corporation during the war, and joined the staff of *National Geographic* in 1918. In 1921, Heinl organized the Heinl News Service, which supplied Washington news for its newspaper and magazine subscribers, and in 1926 he joined the editorial staff of the *Washington Post*, where he remained until his retirement in 1934.

EVD to David Karsner

January 26, 1925
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear David:

The pain and sorrow and distress we feel and the deep, tender sympathy we have for you and your beloved Esther[1] in this hour of awful trial and agony cannot be put into these lines, and if I did not know you as I do, how well you always understand, I should almost

yield to dumb despair in the presence of the tragic fate which seems to have overwhelmed you. My heart beat fast and my blood ran cold as I followed the lines of your letter and noted the terrible ordeal through which your dear Esther was required to pass, made harrowing and shocking to the last degree by the obduracy of the surgeon in charge in insisting, despite what was told him to the contrary, upon carving his lines in the quivering flesh of his victim, according to his preconceived and erroneous diagnosis. Such an awful mistake hardly seems excusable under any circumstances and in your eyes must appear as nothing less than a crime. But the remarkable and redeeming feature of it all was the marvellous courage and fortitude of your adored wife. There could have been no more fearful or terrifying test, and as she withstood the crisis so serenely and unflinchingly it is proof positive that she has the brave, intrepid and unconquerable spirit and soul of the gods.

Let us hope, dear David, that the worst by far is over; that the ordeal of torture and terror is past, and that from now on there will be found in nature's healing processes full restorative of all the hurts and wounds; that the precious babe may be saved to you in all health and wholesomeness, and that your beautiful Esther will finally emerge radiant and triumphant, and all the more precious to you for the awful price exacted by her love, and that many, many happy and blissful and fruitful years may come to your hearthstone in compensation for the days of anxiety, suspense, and agony you are now having to endure.

We are happy to know that dear little Walta is with you and know that she is a world of comfort to you in these crucial hours and days.

There is much more to say but I shall not trespass at a time when letters of this kind can do but little if any good. You know, I am sure, how we all feel without resort to the vain and unsatisfactory attempt to write it. Our hearts are with you and Esther and Walta as if you were of our own family, and all of us unite in tender, loving, devoted sympathy and in all sincere wishes for happier days to come.

Always yours faithfully,
E. V. Debs

TLS, NN Kars.

1. In a letter from Debs to Karsner, January 16, 1925, Debs acknowledged Karsner's "last note saying that your sweetheart Esther was to go to the hospital for a serious operation." Karsner's letter describing his wife's illness has not been found. InTI, Debs Collection.

Roger N. Baldwin to EVD

January 27, 1925
New York City

Dear Gene Debs:

Thanks ever so much for yours of the 25th. That is mighty good of you to push this matter as you have. I am sending the enclosed letter[1] to the managing editor of each of your papers.

Yours,
Roger Baldwin

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Baldwin enclosed a copy of his letter to the commander of the Terre Haute American Legion post. As noted, the letter was published in the *Terre Haute Post*, February 12, 1925.

Harriot Stanton Blatch to [EVD]

February 9, 1925
New York City

Dear Leader,

Do you know I have never had the pleasure of meeting you, much less talking to you! Before you and I pass on to the next world—we may go over Jordan together for we are the same age—we ought to exchange ideas face to face. I think we would find we had much in common once outside socialism.

Where is Terre Haute as related to Chicago and Buffalo? I am going to Chicago for the Conventions Feb. 19-23,[1] & on my way back to Buffalo the 24th or 25th. I might stop off a few hours at Terre Haute, unless that throws you into a fit and me off the track. Or perhaps, happy thought, you are going to Chicago too!

The cheque which you so generously sent for the Committee work, I have endorsed over to the School, & no doubt you will receive in a few days a proper official receipt. Kindly give Mrs. Debs my best regards, and with all good wishes for yourself

Believe me

Cordially yours
Harriot Stanton Blatch

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. The Conference for Progressive Political Action met in Chicago February 21-22, 1925; the Socialist party convention, at which the party withdrew from the CPPA, was held February 23-24, 1925. Blatch was on the national executive committee of the CPPA, director of its political amnesty committee, and an active supporter of the Rand School.

Edwin D. Minteer to EVD

February 14, 1925
Terre Haute, Indiana

Dear Mr. Debs:

Enclosed you will find a clipping from our paper[1] of Thursday, Feb. 12. During November and December I was out of the city, ill in a hospital. It was during this period that the Baldwin-Legion controversy came up. Consequently I desired thoroly to inform myself on the issue before taking any action. Our files were out of the office being bound and it was a considerable time before I could find out just what sort of story our paper had published.

I would be pleased to meet you some afternoon soon and at that time discuss with you the communication which you sent to The Post.[2] If you care to arrange such a meeting I would be pleased to hear from you.

Yours very truly,
Edwin D. Minteer
Editor Terre Haute Post

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. The enclosed clipping contained Roger Baldwin's letter to the commander of the Terre Haute American Legion post.

2. In a letter to the *Post* dated February 6, 1925, Debs asked, "How many American Legion members were actually under fire in France?" and "How many enlisted in the service as volunteers?" He denounced the American Legion for presuming to be the "moral censor of this community." *Miami Valley Socialist*, February 27, 1925.

EVD to Edwin D. Minteer

February 18, 1925
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Mr. Minteer:

Your note under date of the 14th. inst. was not delivered by the postman until this morning. I have read it carefully, together with

the clipping enclosed by you which I had already noted in the Post of the 12th. inst. I would like to believe that the Post is "Clean—Fearless—Independent" according to its printed motto but it certainly does not appear so in its attitude toward Roger Baldwin. I note your explanation and am perfectly willing to make all necessary allowance for the adverse circumstances in your situation, but the fact remains that the Post, as well as the Star and Tribune, has been grossly unfair and unjust in its treatment of Mr. Baldwin. The belated publication of Mr. Baldwin's letter without a date line to betray it and without explanation for the delay indicated, if not a "clean, fearless and independent" attitude at least a desire to make restitution for which I give you and the Post full credit.

It is now too late to publish my article to prevent my seeking recourse for a hearing in other directions, unless you choose to publish it on your own account to which I of course have no objection.

I have given my article to the socialist and labor press,[1] the only press whose columns are open to me in this matter, not merely on account of my consideration for Mr. Baldwin and my resentment against his outrageous treatment by the daily papers of Terre Haute, but to show the people in general, as far as they may be reached by our limited circulation, just what the capitalist press is in its attitude toward those who are not in aggreement with what it is the mouthpiece of and what it stands for. I have long since learned by bitter experience just how fair and honest and truthful and independent these papers {are,} and how their practices square with their professions, but unfortunately the great body of the people lack this knowledge or they could not be hoodwinked and kept in darkness and ignorance and servitude as they now are. The very least I can do is my little part in opening their eyes that they may know the truth.

I should be very glad to meet you personally at any time or place to suit your convenience. I am just leaving for Chicago to be gone some days but on my return it will give me pleasure to be at your service.

With all good wishes I am,

Yours very truly,
[Eugene V. Debs]

TLc, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Debs's article "The Capitalist Press and Fair Play" (*Miami Valley Socialist,* February 27, 1925) described the Baldwin-Legion controversy, Baldwin's "brief, dignified and tempered answer in his defense," which the Terre Haute papers refused to publish (until the *Post* published it on February 12, 1925), and his own efforts to secure a "fair hearing" for Baldwin. The article quoted his February 6, 1925, letter to Minteer.

Theodore Debs to Joseph E. Cohen

March 4, 1925
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Joe:

We may well exchange congratulations and your fine little message just received shows clearly how you feel in regard to the recent conventions[1] and the outlook for the future.

I never did feel just right about our party being hooked up with some of those middle-class elements and some of those wholly reactionary labor unions represented in the C.P.P.A., and I felt a positive relief when the ties were severed completely at Chicago.[2] The convention, from what Gene says, was an inspiration. He speaks of it as a re-birth and feels positive that from now on the party will rapidly regain lost ground and in the not remote future be stronger and better than ever. When you say that you are for "the straight out job" you speak out of my heart as well as your own.

Gene wants me to thank you with his love for this latest kindness from you in so generously considering him and his efforts in behalf of your cause. He thinks you are a whole lot too generous in your expressions but he knows they come from your heart, and coming from no other source would such beautiful confidence and devotion mean more to him.

Lovingly as ever,
Theodore Debs

TLS, NNU Tam, Debs Collection.

1. The CPPA and Socialist party conventions in Chicago in February 1925.
2. As noted, the Socialist party ended its affiliation with the CPPA at the Chicago convention. Its reasons for doing so and its continued willingness "to merge its political functions in a genuine political party of American workers" are described in *Socialist World,* March 1925.

Theodore Debs to David Karsner

March 11, 1925
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear David:

I have just given careful reading to your good letter of the 9th. which came an hour ago and which had the right of way to my

consideration. I note with keenest interest what you say of the successful operation upon your dear wife. Gene and I both have thought of her and you with the deepest anxiety and the sincerest hope that in spite of all unfavorable indications to the contrary she might and would rise triumphant from her terrible ordeal and be spared to herself and to you in all her loveliness and beautiful womanhood.

I note all you say about Paul Hanna. It is exceedingly interesting to know of your relation with him. It is certainly a fine tribute to him that you who knew him so well and were able to appraise him so justly, loved him with such loyal devotion. We were shocked to hear of his death and we have not yet been able to realize that that fine intellect has been extinguished and that great soul sent on its long journey to the other side.

Thus far, dear David, I am with you heart and soul in the way I have always been with you and always shall be with you however the fates may drive us in different directions. But for the rest of your letter and all the rest of it we are at swords' points. I cannot agree to a single word in all of the almost three pages you have covered.

Gene and I have been with the Russian revolution from the hour of its birth clear through all its phases until the communists under Zinoviev, the brutal dictator, who recently drove out Trotsky, inauguarated his reign of terror and imprisoned, starved and shot the socialist revolutionaries who had been exiled under the czar for fighting for freedom, under the pretense that they were counter revolutionaries. For this the Soviet government will pay in good time and pay in full for all the outrages it has perpetrated to fortify itself by military force to create a condition of espionage and terrorism that the czar himself might have envied.

As for the communists and socialists. If the socialists have hate and rancor the communists are responsible for it. When they left the Socialist party they declared they would at once organize the real revolutionary party. After six years they have organized nothing but disruption and destruction. They had their mobs of hoodlums go [to] the Socialist meetings in and around Chicago to break them up and they kept it up until Gene went there and put a summary end to their rowdyism. You never heard of socialists going to a communist meeting and raising a rough house but I can tell you of hundreds of instances of communists, so-called, (they are no more communists than cockroaches are birds of paradise) have gone to socialist meetings to terrorize them and break them up in a disgraceful riot.[1]

Now as for the Socialist party you never were more mistaken in your life than when you think it has reached its finish. The fact is that it is just getting its start and you will know it before another year

rolls around. Last night here in Terre Haute we reorganized with a large and enthusiastic membership the socialist local that the communists smashed three years ago as they have smashed hundred of socialist locals all over the country.

At the national Socialist convention recently held at Chicago the national party debt was wiped out in an hour.[2] Six thousand dollars were flung into the basket and ten thousand dollars more pledged. The convention was the most enthusiastic and the most harmonious in the history of the party. There was not a ripple of discord from first to last. I am sending you by even mail some documents {to show} how near the Socialist party is dead and ready for burial. Eight tremendous regional mass demonstrations are to be held this summer.[3] Gene will be the main speaker at each of them and from twenty-five to fifty thousand real revolutionists without the communist bluster will be in attendance. The one in New York meets in September and when it does you will see something that will certainly disillusion {you} as to the demise of the Socialist party.

Now I don't think I need to say more. This much I had to say because of the low estimate placed by you upon the party and the cause in which I believe with all my heart. But I do not allow this to trench upon my personal feeling toward you. I shall eternally remember what you have been to both Gene and myself through good and evil report and although we may be forced apart wide as the seas on economic and political issues, I shall always think of you in the same loving and appreciative way.

Sincerely hoping the convalescence of your dear Esther may end in complete restoration I am as ever and always,

Yours faithfully,
Theodore

TLS, NN Kars.

1. In "Debs Strikes 'Lefts' Who Stab at Party" (*Miami Valley Socialist,* March 30, 1923), Debs denounced Communist tactics and "rowdyism" at Socialist party meetings, citing his own experiences at meetings in Chicago and elsewhere.

2. In its summary of the February 1925 Socialist party convention in Chicago, *Socialist World* (March 1925) announced that the "National Party Debt has been wiped out" and that the party had "a Balance of $4912.17."

3. One of the actions taken at the February 1925 convention was the decision to hold "eight regional mass conventions, followed by the same number of mass demonstrations" at Cleveland, May 30-31; Minneapolis, June 21-22; St. Louis, July 4-5; Los Angeles, July 25-26; San Francisco, August 30-31; Seattle, date undecided; and New York, September 19-20. *Socialist World,* May 1925.

EVD to Mabel Dunlap Curry

[April 28, 1925]
New York City

My dearest,

Just a line of love and good morning! Hope this finds you resting and in good spirits at your dear old home—the hallowed spot where you first saw the light.[1] Visions of your beautiful father come to me and I feel the touch of his clasped hands and see the love-light in his kind eyes as when we met and parted on that memorable day when he was on his last, long, fanciful, and unreturning journey.

When I awoke this morning a bunch of lilacs and the note enclosed were on my dresser. I had gone to bed at 9.30. (I'm sticking rigidly to my program & no matter who the company are I excuse myself & bid them good night when it is time to retire).

Kirkpatrick who is in the room adjoining mine happened to be down in the office at the clerk's desk when he heard a lady ask the clerk about me. It was Helen & she left the note and the bouquet with the clerk and he handed them to Kirkpatrick & the latter put them on my dresser when I was asleep—I had dropped a line to Helen, Rosalie & David,[2] asking them to call me on the phone, and saying that I'd like to see them while in the city.[3] I didn't wish them to feel slighted as they'd know I was here through the papers. I shall not be able to call on any of them but I shall ask them to come to the hotel for a little visit & I'll be lucky if I see them for I shall be busy every waking minute here. There will be just meetings of our N.E.C.[4] and of the Board & special committee of the Jewish Forward[5] about very important financial matters & I shall have to be present every moment to see that all goes right. Helen's note is characteristic as she is full of kindness and keenness to entertain her friends.

How I wish & wish the [one word illegible] were here! It will not let go a moment.

My love with my heart in it—
Gene

ALS, InU, Lilly Library, Curry Papers.

1. Curry was born in Franklin, Indiana.
2. Probably Helen Gardner, Rosalie Goodyear, and David Karsner.
3. Debs was the honored guest at a Socialist party dinner at the Yorkville Casino in New York on April 29, 1925. Dinner program, InTI, Debs Collection.
4. The party's national executive committee met at the Breslin Hotel, where Debs was staying, on April 28-29, 1925. Minutes of the meeting are in InTI, Debs Collection.
5. At the April 28-29 meeting of the national executive committee, representatives

of the *Jewish Daily Forward* "announced a cash appropriation from the Forward of $15,000 and pledged that an additional $10,000 would be raised for putting the organizational plan of the party into effect." Minutes, p. 9. InTI, Debs Collection.

Norman Thomas to EVD

May 2, 1925
New York City

Dear Gene Debs:

I much appreciate your letter of May 1st written in your own hand and am sorry that you felt it necessary to write it.

I was of course disappointed that you could not lunch with the *Nation* group.[1] I had thought that Kirkpatrick was going to let me know definitely Thursday morning and was a little embarrassed because I had told the Nation that from your conversation Tuesday evening and Kirkpatrick's Wednesday evening I had hopes that you would be able to come. I knew you had not definitely accepted Tuesday night but understood that if you were in town and physically able to make any engagements, except one inevitably growing out of the meeting of the National Executive Committee, you would come to the Nation lunch. My eagerness in the matter was due particularly to my desire to be with you there, but in larger part, to my feeling that you might have a real influence on the Nation which in turn has considerable influence in the country.

All this is by way on explanation of my urgency. The last thing I should want to do is to add to your burden.

With warm regards and best wishes, I am

Cordially yours,
Norman Thomas
Executive Director.

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Thomas was now executive director of the League for Industrial Democracy. Oswald Villard Garrison was editor of the *Nation;* the associate editors included Arthur Warner, Lewis Gannett, Joseph Wood Krutch, Freda Kirchwey, and Mark Van Doren. *Nation,* April 29, 1925.

EVD to Lucy Robins

May 3, [1925]
New York City

Dear Lucy,

Your special letter came into my hands only an hour ago. You are mistaken, sadly so, for I have not forgotten & can never forget you. I inquired about you a score of times but not one of the comrades seemed to know your present location. It grieves me to think you feel as you do for in my heart there is only love and a deep sense of gratitude for you. I have just returned from 287 Broadway,[1] have been kept so busy that I have not had any time to visit the dear friends and comrades who are so sweet to me for the loving service they have been to me.

Hoping this finds you well and prosperous and happy, dear Lucy, and that I may yet see you, if but a moment, before being obliged to leave the city, I am as ever and always

Lovingly your friend and comrade
Eugene V. Debs

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection, Robins Papers.

1. The Union Square Hotel, where Robins was living at the time.

Harry Weinberger[1] to EVD

May 25, 1925
New York City

My dear Gene:

I received a letter from Emma Goldman and she asked me to write to you giving you her affectionate greetings and to say that she has retained a warm spot in her heart for you, even though you have failed to understand the motive which made her go into the "Morning World" with her first articles,[2] and she thinks you are a grand old soul and she likes you immensely, and she sends me a reply to the Business Trade Union Delegation Report[3] and a copy of Time and Tide Magazine and her article on Women of the Russian Revolution,[4] which I am sending you under separate cover.

Personal regards also from

Very truly yours,
Harry Weinberger

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Harry Weinberger (1886-1944) was a New York City attorney who specialized in civil liberties cases. He was counsel for Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman in their fight against deportation to Russia in 1919. *New York Times,* March 6, 1944.

2. In 1923, Goldman published a series of seven articles, based on her experiences in Russia and generally critical of the Communist regime in Russia, in the *New York Morning World.* Her book *My Disillusionment in Russia* appeared the same year.

3. Read *British* Trade Union Delegation Report on conditions in Russia, which Goldman attacked as "a complete whitewash of the Soviet regime." Emma Goldman, *Living My Life* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1931), 2:974.

4. Goldman's "Women of the Russian Revolution" appeared in *Time and Tide,* May 8, 1925.

EVD to Harry Weinberger

June 1925
[Terre Haure, Indiana]

My dear Harry Weinberger:

Please allow me to thank you most warmly for your very kind letter of the 25th just received and for the enclosed pamphlet and copy of Time and Tide which I am glad indeed to have and to which I shall give careful reading at my earliest leisure.

The articles by Emma Goldman on "Women of the Russian Revolution" will be of especial interest to me, as is everything of a printed nature that bears her name.

I have not infrequently found my self in disagreement with Emma Goldman but I have never for one instant doubted her rectitude or courage, nor have I been unmindful of her very decided ability as both speaker and writer.

I have been heartily with her in all the brutal, shameless persecution to which she has been subjected by our cruel and cowardly capitalist government which will one day be pilloried in history for having climaxed its outrages upon her by driving her from the country under the most disgraceful circumstances.

It is gratifying to me indeed to know that Emma Goldman entertains such a friendly feeling toward me. This certainly honors me and I can say in all frankness that I have the same affectionate personal feeling for her and otherwise hold her in the highest esteem as a woman battling bravely against great odds to serve humanity and to bring freedom to the world.

No one who really knows Emma Goldman can fail to appreciate her as one of the commanding personalities in the struggle of our day to emancipate labor and to humanize the race.

When you write her please do me the kindness to say to her that I feel the outrage perpetrated upon her by the United States government even more keenly and resent it more bitterly than if I had been the victim of it, and that although I may disagree with her about some matters I can and do honor her for her fidelity to her convictions, and that I send her my loving greetings and warmest wishes and hope some day to see her again.

Thanking you again and again for your kindness I am as ever,

Your faithfully,
EUGENE V. DEBS

TLc, MiU, Labadie Collection.

EVD to Bertha Hale White

June 3, 1925
Terre Haute, Indiana

Dear Comrade Bertha:

There are some important party matters I must write to you about and I wish you would please let Comrade Kirkpatrick and also Comrade Birch and Lilith Wilson[1] read this letter if they are there, and then let me know what you think of its contents.

In what I have to say I am going to be perfectly frank as I have always tried to be in party matters. The Convention and Demonstration at Cleveland[2] were flat, humiliating failures compared to what they should have been, and will have anything but an encouraging influence upon those that are to follow. There were several reasons for the failure of the Demonstration. The intense summer heat of the day and the fact that people sought the outdoors and found their enjoyment in the local automobile races which were the exciting public event of the day and attracted some fifty to a hundred thousand people were probably the main deterrents to a successful indoor meeting. The 50c admission rate did the rest. Had there been a 25c rate as I have always insisted, with 50c and up for reserved seats, boxes and special positions the crowd would have been very much larger and the results better in every way.

But the Convention was the weakest feature of all and there is no use blinking the fact that it was a dismal affair and the communists and their organ have good grounds for their ridicule of the affair.[3] In a great city, an immense industrial center, where we once had a local of nearly two thousand members and where the Socialists cast

nearly 30,000 votes for Mayor, we were able after months of beating the bushes and advertising and spending hundreds of dollars to get just enough Socialists together from half a dozen different states to make a fair-size local or branch meeting. And that is all. That convention demonstrated as clearly as anything could that the Socialist party is as near a corpse as a thing can be and still show signs of life. There is a reason for this that I propose to discuss in this letter with the frankness due to you and the rest of my associates in the National Office. Either there is something dead wrong with the Socialist Party or there is something dead wrong with the management of its affairs. We shall see.

There are in this country hundreds of labor organizations of all kinds and they all have funds in their treasury, pay their way and get along without begging like paupers to keep alive. There are numbers of Jewish labor and socialist societies of various kinds which conduct stores, schools and other enterprises and have plenty of money to meet all their demands. The Socialist party is the only organization in the entire lot that is a perpetual mendicant and beggar, that is always dead broke, pressed for debts it cannot pay, squeezing the last cent and bleeding to the last drop the few loyal souls it has to draw upon, and the more money it gets the poorer it becomes and the worse it is off. Why is this?

In the last seven years, since I was first arrested at Cleveland on account of the war, several hundred thousand dollars have poured into the National Office, mainly on my account, and not a dollar has remained there. For myself and my brother who have given ourselves wholly to the service of the party during all that time with all the means at our command, we have not received enough to pay our living expenses. During this time I have refused all kinds of lecture and speaking engagements that would have made me independent, refusing steadfastly anything for myself and giving everything to the party. I do not say this to claim anything for myself at this time or to make any complaint for I am not of the complaining kind, but simply that we may have the facts of the situation before us in dealing with the questions at issue.

Now let me say to you, dear comrade, that I have reached some very definite conclusions in this matter and one of them is that this state of affairs is due wholly to mismanagement, and in saying this I want it understood that I accept my full share of the responsibility for that mismanagement.

We have been living beyond our means and beyond our income and we are doing so at this very hour and that is the fundamental cause of our pitiful plight and our gloomy outlook for the future.

When in 1880, after the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen had been bankrupted and was overwhelmed with debt and threatened with dissolution, I was made grand secretary and treasurer, the very first thing I did was to cut off every dollar of expense that could possibly be cut off, reduce every item to the most rigid economy and confine the expenditures from the very hour of my appointment within the income. The income was very small, but the outgo, the expenditure, was still smaller, leaving a little margin that soon began to grow. Within a year every dollar of the debt had been paid and the organization was on its feet and grew steadily in numbers, in power and financially, and never again did it want for a dollar for anything it needed in carrying on its work. I did not stop in swell hotels at that time and invite the poverty-stricken party members to banquets at $2.00 per plate.

When at the banquet in Cleveland Comrade Birch Wilson announced pathetically in his speech that the party was bankrupt, the National Office not having funds enough to meet its payroll, I felt not only humiliated but disgraced. There we sat in one of the highest-priced hotels in Cleveland,[4] consuming an extravagant banquet, and confessing that we were paupers and beggars and could not even pay the help in the National Office of our party. In that financial condition we had no business whatever in that kind of a hotel nor at that kind of a banquet. I have been going to Cleveland for years and I always stopped at a hotel and had a decent, comfortable room at a dollar and a half a day less than I paid at the hotel chosen by our people. But this hotel and its kind are not good enough, it appears, since we have become absolutely penniless and have to put in most of our time begging for enough to keep us alive. I am objecting right now against this extravagance as long as we are self-confessed bankrupts and cannot pay for our keep. I shall never again speak at a banquet at two dollars a plate.

Why must we, a pauper and beggar party, give our banquets at plutocratic hotels and charge plutocratic rates to our poverty-stricken comrades? There is no sense in it but a whole lot of indecency which offends me and my sense of what is proper. Why can we not give our banquets in an ordinary hall instead of a swell hotel, and have it served by some ordinary caterer at not more than a dollar a plate? There would be far more in attendance, it would be far more consistent and satisfactory, and the financial and other results would be far different from our present method of making the affair so expensive to our comrades for sheer and senseless extravagance that they have nothing left when it comes to contributing funds to the party.

In the present state of our party every cent should be carefully

guarded. I see no use in members of the N.E.C. voting by telegraph on matters that come before them and I refuse to do it. There is nothing so important that cannot wait a day or two and go by mail. I do not use the long distance telephone for I cannot afford it, and I use the telegraph only in cases of extreme necessity for the same reason, and the National Office in its present state can get along without these items of expense. It is true they are small but they are indicative of a policy that has kept the party in a beggarly financial condition.

Now my conclusion is that the Socialist party has got to get within its income at once or give up and quit as a failure for it will certainly end in that at the rate we are now going.

I object to any organizer being put into the field until the National Office has been put on a basis of expenditure within its income. If it cannot meet its payroll it has got to cut its payroll; not only this it has got to cut its rent roll. I understand the rent is now $250.00 per month. Now it is perfectly senseless to have that rent to pay when we have nothing to pay it with, and that has been the trouble all this time and will be the trouble more and more until the party is finally completely wrecked.

When I was told that the national debt was something over five thousand dollars and I agreed to personally set about to raise the money to pay that debt,[5] and it was raised, I supposed a new leaf would be turned and there would be a decided change for the better but instead of this we are, if possible, worse off than before. The more money we raise the poorer we get because we spend it faster than it comes in, a very simple matter in mathematics.

As I now feel I shall not sign another note for a bank loan for the National Office. It is no use. It is like pouring water through a seive.

I do not in the least blame Comrade Whitlock for refusing to put any more money into the national office. Whitlock is a shrewd business man and he can see at a glance that with our way of doing business we are getting nowhere with the money he is giving us, and he has wisely concluded to give no more, and I shall certainly not ask him to. I have been used all these years as a kind of bait to draw funds to the National Office and I have concluded to quit serving in that role. I would not so humiliate myself on my own account and I shall do so no longer for the party for it is quite clear that it does the party no good.

Now as I have said we have got to get within our income and if the National Office cannot and will not do that then I have made up my mind to resign from the N.E.C. for I can see nothing but disaster and ignominy ahead and I do not propose to lead the party to that

kind of an end. I shall fill all the engagements made for me in good faith, but I shall do so in my own name and not as a national party official.

If the National Office cannot conduct its business on a basis of spending less instead of more than comes in, then it is simply a dead weight upon the party, and I am almost persuaded that the best thing that could happen to the party to give it a chance to grow would be to entirely abolish the National Office for the next six months. It absorbs everything our poverty-stricken locals can raise and I do not see that it is giving them anything like an equivalent in return. No wonder they and others refuse any longer to be bled to the last penny to keep up a party so managed as to be in a state of perpetual bankruptcy. It was this very thing that I had to face in New York and that is the deep-seated conviction on the part of many that our party is mismanaged and weak and almost hopeless because we don't know what to do with the money that is contributed to its support.

Now it is clear that we can't pay the rent of our present quarters.[6] Therefore we have got to get out and that without delay and we have got to limit our rent and other expenses to what we can pay and no more, if we have got to shrink to the size of one room and one desk. That is how we will get our start and if that policy had been pursued in the past we would not today be in our pitiable plight, and I am feeling it today more keenly than I have ever felt it before, and this because I know beyond doubt what can be done if the party is given a chance, and the crushing load that has rested upon its emaciated body is removed and it is no longer halted and paralyzed by chronic bankruptcy and lack of means. I know that a little store room could be secured on Halsted or some other street for half and less the rent now being paid, that would serve our purpose just as well. If there is a mass of junk in the National Office for which there is no room, then it must be gotten rid of for it is eating itself up right along in excess rent. Our shrivelled little party cannot support a headquarters such as we now have and such as is a dead load under which it cannot stagger out of its impotency and poverty.

In presenting these matters I have had to be plain and candid, but I am sure you must know there is nothing of a personal nature intended to reflect upon you or anyone in the National Office. It is not persons but a policy I am criticizing and objecting to, a policy if persisted in that will lead inevitably to disaster and ignominy. I know you have borne a terrible burden and I know that all of your associates have done their very best and I have never found any fault with them and do not now. Your individual services have been all and much more than could have been expected but the policy has been wrong

and this has got to be righted and at once if the party is to be saved and made what it ought to be.

With love and warmest wishes as ever,

Yours fraternally,
(Signed) EUGENE V. DEBS

Dear Bertha:

There is a point I omitted in my letter to you this morning through oversight that I wish to emphasize now. And that is that as long as we are moneyless, insolvent, bankrupt, all efforts to organize will be paralyzed from the very source from which they should receive their help and inspiration. No one wants to join a bankrupt party or have anything to do with an insolvent concern. In other words no one wants to have any identity with a failure and it is as such that the Socialist party appears to the thousands today who ought to join it but won't. If it had a full treasury and was known to be prosperous instead of a moneyless mendicant become a chronic beggar, these thousands would flock to it from every quarter. There is nothing that money runs away from and stays away from as persistently as it does from where there is no money. A bankrupt concern, especially a so-called revolutionary party, is like a smallpox patient in quarantine. The whole world steers clear of the moneyless man or the moneyless concern and it is useless to try to organize unless and until the National Office first organizes itself out of debt and becomes solvent by keeping within its income. It would be a tragedy in my life and an everlasting rebuke if that money I got from the New York Jewish comrades for the party went the way of the rest with nothing to show for it in the end, and that is the way it will go if the present policy is not radically changed.

With love as ever,
(Signed) EUGENE V. DEBS

P.S. When Comrade Wilson in his speech at the banquet laid the state of the Socialist Party bare by declaring it flat broke, in effect, and even unable to meet its payroll, that blow did more to flatten out what was left of the party, to discourage all efforts to rebuild it, and to paralyze all efforts at organizing than any blow the capitalists or their government could have dealt it. Comrade Wilson was perfectly right in coming out with the truth, feeling, no doubt, that it had to be told and not a little humiliated, I can well imagine, in the telling, but the deplorable state of the party thus laid bare revealed a corpse

instead of a living thing, and who wants to have anything to do with revivifying a corpse?

TLc, WiH, Hillquit Papers.

1. Birch Wilson was state secretary of the Socialist party in Pennsylvania and a member of the party's national executive committee; in 1921 he married Lilith Martin Wilson, an Anderson, Indiana, native, who became a national organizer and speaker for the Socialist party and served three terms in the Pennsylvania state legislature. *Reading Eagle,* October 14, 1970.

2. As noted, the party convention and demonstration in Cleveland were held on May 30-31, 1925.

3. Alfred Wagenknecht's account of the Cleveland convention in the *Daily Worker,* June 3, 1925, described it as "afraid to talk much class struggle for this may drive some away" and essentially a fund-raising event "which flew the red flag of the auctioneer, not of the revolution."

4. The Winton Hotel.

5. In a letter to "Dear Comrade" dated February 1925, Debs discussed the "$5,000 debt" of the party and declared that he had "voluntarily assumed the obligation to see this debt wiped out." The letter was sent to thirty-five of the party's leaders and others presumably best able to help financially. InTI, Debs Collection.

6. At 2653 Washington Boulevard in Chicago.

EVD to Clarence Darrow

June 4, 1925
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Clarence Darrow:

You and our fine old mutual friend, George Schilling, true to your record of many years' standing, have been extemely kind and thoughtful in sending me the copy of "Altgeld in Illinois" by Waldo R. Browne,[1] so flatteringly inscribed, which I found awaiting me on my return from Ohio. I had already read with intense interest and appreciation, not unmixed with sad reflection and painful memories, this very excellent, high-hearted and courageous biography of the shamefully maligned and pre-eminently great Altgeld, but this particular volume coming from your hands, bearing your more than beautiful and generous tribute inscribed in its pages, gives it a value Rockefeller does not possess and makes it a treasure indeed of priceless worth for which I beg you, dear friends, each of you, to accept my warmest thanks with the assurance of my lasting gratitude and devotion.

When I think of how great, how supremely great Altgeld was in heart and brain, in soul and conscience, and how petty, mean and

contemptible Bryan was and is, and that Altgeld was rewarded with contumely, malice, hatred and almost oblivion, in fact was literally murdered by that inexpressibly despicable thing called Patriotic Americanism, and that Bryan was popularized almost to idolatry and glorified by press and pulpit as an apostle of truth and an evangel of religion, this shallow-minded mouther of empty phrases, this pious, canting mountebank, this prophet of the stone age, my blood runs hot in my veins with indignation and resentment at the utterly cruel and perverse ways of the world in which we live and the age-old rule of crowning frauds, hypocrites, time-servers and scoundrels, and murdering prophets, pathfinders and all other true leaders of the people and saviors of the race.

But there are nevertheless forces at work underlying all that is false and vicious and damnable in our present ignorant, superstitious and brutal social life, and in time, though ages may pass, the truth will triumph and right will prevail in the world.

In that day history will be revised with a searching eye and with a pen "dipped in the lead of rock forever" and in that day John P. Altgeld the hero and martyr, the apostle and savior of his age will be known and loved of all men and his memory honored and revered throughout the world.

Thanking you again and again from the depths of my heart, and with love and greetings and best wishes to you both I am

Yours to the last turning of the road,
Eugene V. Debs

TLS, IHi.

1. Waldo R. Browne (1876-1954) was a journalist and author who worked as an editor of the *Dial* and the *Nation* and later on the editorial staff of the Federal Writers Project in Washington. His *Altgeld of Illinois* was published in 1924. *New York Times*, January 27, 1954.

EVD to Ralph Chaplin

June 9, 1925
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Ralph:

You appear mighty big and fine and generous in the note just received from you notwithstanding your well known reticence and modesty. A thousand thanks! I would like to be seated under that beautiful Elm this very moment while it is a thousand or more in the

shade here. I beg of you for Sandburg's sake whom I know you love not to hesitate one instant about walking into his arms. You will delight him. I know, and I know too how happy he will be to {have} you look into his books. I shall be away from here speaking and organizing most of the time between now and October. I shall have to cover all the states between the Atlantic and the Pacific. I often, very often {am} with you in that sweet-souled cottage and that delicious little Garden of Paradise with you naming and christening the beautiful flowers.

Gahan[1] wrote me not long ago telling me what fine things you told him about me on his visit to you, and I felt enormously flattered—considerably chesty I fear. With most people, as Lowell said of Lincoln, I "dread praise not blame," but there are a few, I confess gladly, whose praise sets my heart aglow and fills me with the joy of living, and Ralph Chaplin is one of them.

Whether you write or not there is a steady humming over the invisible connecting wires and I have a sure line on what your heart is singing to mine.

With love to you all from the wife, Theodore and his wife, and hoping this finds you and Edith and Ivan all brimming as when I left you I am,

Yours always,
E. V. Debs

This is our wedding anniversary—married forty years ago today. Ah, me how the years go fast!

TLS, MiU, Labadie Collection.

1. John A. Gahan, editor of the IWW monthly publication, *Industrial Pioneer,* wrote to Debs on March 30, 1925, to ask for a May Day article for the magazine and to tell Debs of his visit and dinner with Chaplin at Lombard, Illinois. InTI, Debs Collection.

EVD to Bertha Hale White

June 11, 1925
Terre Haute, Indiana

Dear Comrade Bertha:

Your letter of the 9th. came last evening and yours of the 10th. this morning. Both have been read with deep interest and given careful consideration.

First, let me thank you for the two checks you enclose in the amount of $52.78 each to cover the expenses of Theodore and myself attending the Cleveland convention. I did not expect you to remit and should not have wished you to do so while the money was needed to meet more urgent demands.

If you will read my letter of the 3rd. again you will see that I said near the beginning that I was convinced that there was something wrong with the party or something wrong with its management. I wish to repeat that now. I then added that I was likewise convinced that the cause of our trouble was mismanagement of its affairs, and I still believe that to be true. But you will also note that I did not excuse myself and that I did not accuse you or any other individual connected with the management. I did not set out to criticise or to find fault with any official or any employe of the national office. That was not my purpose at all and I tried to make this perfectly clear in the following paragraph quoted from my letter:

> "In presenting these matters I have had to be plain and candid, but I am sure you must know there is nothing of a personal nature intended to reflect upon you or anyone in the national office. It is not persons but a policy I am criticising and objecting to, a policy if persisted in that will lead inevitably to disaster and ignominy. I know you have borne a terrible burden and I know that all of your associates have done their very best and I have never found any fault with them and do not now. Your individual services have been all and much more than could have been expected but the policy has been wrong and this has got to be righted and at once if the party is to be saved and made what it ought to be."

In the light of this plain statment I cannot see how you can feel that I meant to accuse or charge you with anything or reflect upon you or anyone in the national office in any way. Had I felt that you were at fault and felt inclined to criticise you I would have been frank enough to say so in direct terms and I would {not} have left it to inference or assumption.

Now let me go over some of the ground again to make my position clear as I can for there cannot be and there must not be the slightest personal misunderstanding between us. Earnestly as I feel the necessity of pointing out certain things in the party's affairs that are wrong and that should be changed I should regret deeply if in doing so I gave unintended offense or hurt the feelings of any of my associates in the national office and so I repeat that nothing could have been farther from my intentions than to fix individual responsibility for general mismanagement as I conceived it to be, or to cast any reflection

upon any particular official, and least of all yourself. I felt myself to blame as much as anyone and stated explicitly that I would bear my share of the responsibility.

And now let me quote another paragraph from my last letter:

> "There are in this country hundreds of labor organizations of all kinds and they all have funds in their treasury, pay their way and get along without begging like paupers to keep alive."

The Socialist party is the solitary exception among them. It is the one and only labor organization that is a chronic bankrupt and beggar. Why is this? Either the Socialist party is not wanted and there is no place for it and it ought to quit and get out of the way, or there is something wrong in the way it is being managed. If our theory and economic understanding are not totally wrong then there is need of a socialist party, a crying need indeed, and such a party, must meet with corresponding demand and support, but this is not true of the Socialist party, and the question is what is wrong with the party, and why has it no adequate support and why must it limp along, begging on every public occasion for support enough to keep breath in its body? It must be admitted in this connection that a great majority of American socialists are socialists in name only, as the record of the party abundantly proves. They are utterly lacking the spirit and fibre of revolutionary socialism and a party built of them is scheduled to go into the ditch. A few there are, heroic, noble-souled who strive and strain and suffer themselves to be bled almost to the last drop to support the party and bear the burden shifted to their willing shoulders by those who are with the party when it has fair sailing but are first to desert when a snag is struck. We have a classic illustration right here in Terre Haute where we have reorganized the Local. Some thirty former members signed and about half-dozen of these pay their dues. It is a weak party indeed that is built of that kind of material and I have seen so much of it that it is very hard indeed to contemplate it without a feeling of utter disgust.

When the war broke upon the country the Socialist party took its attitude against it and then most of those who had a hand in it deserted the party. Of the large membership but a comparative handful stood by the party declaration and the party attitude clean through. The great majority of them deserted or weakened in one way or another and tamely allowed their locals to be smashed without the least resistence and indeed facilitated the process by abandoning the Local and keeping discreet silence while the outrage was being perpetrated.

And to still further prove their unfitness to build and support a Socialist party they completed the wrecking of the party started by

the capitalist militarists by turning upon each other and cutting each other's throats in a factional feud that came near wiping the party out entirely.

It is this record that I had in mind when I charged that there was something wrong with the party or with its management, and I have called attention to but a very small part of that record, and the less it is referred to, the less we will have to explain and apologize for.

It has always been a matter of self-reproach to to [*sic*] me as well as a bitter reproach to the party at large that {it} had to abandon its official headquarters of Ashland Blvd,[1] because the party could not afford it and that the same headquarters could be afforded by a mere local of Milk Wagon Drivers who not only bought it and paid for it but expended a large additional sum in remodeling and improving it. In a word a local, a single local, of workers can afford a headquarters but the National Socialist party of the United States is too poor to have a home of its own. If that is not commentary to excite disgust I do not know what is. It goes to show the character of our membership in general and just what kind of socialists they are who refuse to put up the few pennies each to house the party and keep it going. Here again it must be admitted, either that a socialist party is not wanted or needed, or that there is no fit material with which to build one, or that its affairs are not rightly managed.

Here allow me to quote from your letter of the 9th.:

> "You have often said the National Office headquarters made you ashamed and that we must have a new headquarters. Why the difference, Gene, in a month's time?"

There has been no difference. I am still ashamed that we have not a decent headquarters and still more ashamed that we cannot even pay for the one we have and that I am driven to the extent of taking the stand I have when it is reported that the national office cannot meet its pay roll because it is utterly without funds. It is not that I would have the office in still meaner quarters that I wrote as I did, for you know how I fell upon that subject but only because grim necessity forces a reduction of expense in spite of all the money we have raised and all that has been pledged and never paid, or {we shall} stagger on to inevitable ruin. That is the situation as it appeared to me when I wrote and that is why I declared that we had to get our expenses within our income no matter what retrenchment had to be made. If this is not true and if we can go on spending more money than we receive and can keep from finally wrecking the party it will have to be by some miracle of which I have no knowledge.

As to the amount of office rent at present being paid[2] I was in error in my last letter and thank you for the correction.

Now another word as to the Cleveland convention. I protested against the arrangements there from the very beginning, as you no doubt remember, and I sensed failure under the plan that was adopted, though I realized that probably the best was done that was possible under the circumstances. When I objected to an indoors meeting and to paying almost a thousand dollars for the rent of a hall[3] it was argued that a crowd outside could not be as effectively covered by collection and with literature as could an indoors meeting, and that therefore we could well afford to pay the big rent and have the meeting inside. This did not convince me but I yielded to the rest. I was told there was no available park or open place outdoors for such a meeting and this seemed strange for a city like Cleveland, but of course the comrades knew who had looked over the ground and their report was conclusive. You will remember also that I favored the removal of the opening convention to some other city with a better prospect of success but it was deemed unwise to make the change. Had the meeting been outdoors in some available open space at an admission fee of 25c we would still have had double or more than double the people and the collection in proportion. Fifty cents general admission is prohibitive to the families of many of our comrades and friends.[4]

You make reference in a disparaging way to the former Cleveland meeting, citing that as a precedent for the recent failure. Yes, I know that meeting was also a failure and I was the particular victim of that failure and there was a good cause for its barren results. If ever all the conditions were favorable for a great and successful meeting it was at Cleveland on my first visit there after my release.[5] I had various offers from there and in order to give the Socialist party, the small fragment of it that was left, the benefit of my personal popularity at the time I went to Cleveland in person and there I was met by a committee representing the City Forum who were anxious to handle the meeting and make it a great success financially and otherwise on my own personal account. Peter Witt assured me that if I would allow them to handle the meeting through the Forum and certain allies they had, they would realize $5,000. for my benefit. He and Rev. Williams[6] and Marguerite Prevey and Tom Clifford and many others begged of me not to let the socialists handle the meeting as it must certainly result in failure. They argued that there was practically nothing left of the Socialist party in Cleveland and that what was left was in a snarl with the communists and utterly discredited, and that it would be foolish and suicidal for me to allow that little bunch to handle the meeting. In the face of all this and of every offer that was

made me by the friends and comrades who wanted the meeting to be financially for my benefit, I refused and let that little fragment handle the meeting to give the Socialist party the benefit of the meeting, whatever it might be, and considering all the circumstances it was more of a meeting than could fairly been expected. That the great hall would have been filled and that I would have realized several thousand dollars for myself had I yielded to the pressure of the Forum people I do not in the least doubt, but I claim no credit for having entirely submerged myself and waived all my personal interests for the benefit of the Socialist party.

Yes, I remember your reporting that of the $5000. promised at the Chicago Banquet[7] but $1300. had been paid. This is another instance to provoke dissillusionment and disgust with socialists. Realizing that that banquet consisted of socialists I took it for granted that those attending it and pledging their word had ordinary honesty and self-respect and would make their word good, and upon that basis I issued certain statements and proposed certain plans only to find that the pledge of a socialist, or of a good many socialists at least, has no value and does not mean anything. And it is out of this material that we are trying to build a party only to find that its foundations are in the quicksand. But this breaking of pledges seems to be an inseparable part of our organized plan of beggary which characterizes every appearance we make in public and against which I have always been in revolt. A membership held together by the proceeds of beggary is not a reliable quantity, nor a measure of strength. Better we had but a small membership of real socialists who paid their dues and supported their party as all other members do in organized bodies than to have a large enrollment consisting mainly of those who contributed not a cent and make necessary a national office with an expense that can not be met and that necessitates a policy of perpetual begging, the most humiliating feature of our "revolutionary" propaganda. It is a fact that many people stay away from socialist meetings because they know the hat will be passed, even though they pay an admission fee {and that} they will be held up for a collection.

What is true of the Banquet at Chicago seems to be true of all the rest of them. In a letter from Kirkpatrick I was advised that none of the Eastern Banquets had made good their promises and that one of them had not remitted at all at the time of writing.

You advised me in your last letter {that} there will be no admission fee charged at Minneapolis. That is another great mistake in my opinion and the result will be another financial failure, or at least anything but {the} success it ought to be. There would be just as many people present with a 25c admission fee. No one stays away on

account of 25c, and if they are depending on the collection it will be the same story as of old.[8]

I am thinking that if instead of launching seven of these expensive meetings {we had started with} one, as I proposed, to see how the experiment worked, we would be better off. But we have them under way now and we are not going to turn back. I feel great confidence in the two California meetings.[9] New York will probably manage to keep most of the proceeds. I remember the comment that was made on the way the proceeds of the banquet {there} were handled.

As to my compensation I have not cared to try to make any definite arrangements while the party was in its present financial condition. I realize that I am chairman of the national executive board and that as such I must show myself more interested in the party than in myself. I did not want official position but accepted as a matter of duty, and I have tried to serve the party with as little thought of self as possible. I note what you say about Comrade Berger proposing that I be paid a definite fee at each meeting and that Milwaukee would pay $250. for the meeting there. In answer to this it can hardly be expected in the present situation that I be paid any fee when our meetings show a deficit as did the one at Cleveland, and I could not and would not accept any fee under such circumstances no matter if I did not receive a dollar compensation. Besides, I did not and do not expect for myself the $250. at Milwaukee. When the negotiations were entered into it was the understanding on my part that the allowance to be made by Milwaukee should go to the national office.

Now as to the matter of $7,000. supposed to have been paid me during 1923. That may be the right amount. I do not know, having no account of it. But I do know, as I said in my previous letter, that this $7000. was not for me alone but was divided with my brother who earned his share in faithful service to the party and for the upkeep of the office here, and I therefore object to having our members given the impression that I have received $7000. a year for myself, and if the record is not corrected I will have to do so myself by issuing a statement giving the facts.[10] Of course I understand that the party has not employed my brother and has not rented this office and is not responsible to or for either, and I do not expect or desire anything of the kind, but I do expect it to be shown in the report dealing with my compensation that it covers the service of my brother as well as myself and the upkeep of an office which is used and always has been used solely in the service of the Socialist party. I do not want to have it appear that I receive a big salary covering other charges any more than you would have it appear that you receive the entire salary drawn by you and all of your assistants. I know very well you

will see this at a glance and that you will realize the necessity of setting the matter right before the party. It is not necessary to open an account with either Theodore or this office if that is not desirable or deemed {not} authorized, and the reason I suggested drawing checks for allowances made me to my brother-in-law[11] instead of myself is that the checks go to him anyway to cover the amounts I have borrowed from him from time to time and owe now to cover my living expenses and my traveling expenses, except in one or two instances, while serving the party. And you may rest assured that so far as I and my brother are concerned we wish no item to appear in {the} financial record concerning us that is not clearly set forth and that will not bear the closest scrutiny.

Now as to Comrade Branstetter let me say that we had a perfect understanding with him in this office about how the allowance to me was to be applied and how it was to be charged in the accounts. Theodore has a clear recollection of the interview and the understanding. Comrade Branstetter made a personal trip here to arrange that and other matters and while here he was told just what my allowance would have to cover, including Theodore who did all the office work, and the upkeep of the office. He understood it perfectly and agreed to the arrangement in behalf of the national office, and the only variation from the agreement was that I constantly accept less as my share than was due me and less than Comrade Branstetter had set apart for me. When my allowance was made for the Western trip covering California I cut down the allowance Comrade Branstetter made me to just $500. I was anxious that the party should have every dollar that I could get along without and it was certainly a small amount I permitted myself to accept in contrast with the enormous amount realized from the trip. Let me also call your attention to the fact that when Comrade Branstetter came down here determined to have me serve the national office exclusively I had hundreds of applications for dates for lectures and speeches and I would have been perfectly justified in accepting these on my own account to cover the expense I was under during the nearly three years I was in prison and during {which} Theodore kept the office running giving his time and service and for which we received practically nothing from the party[12] and very little from other sources that we allowed ourselves to retain, but instead of that I gave the party the benefit of it all, making no personal dates and accepting no personal fees, and in return for this I received barely enough to pay living expenses after deducting what had to be deducted from my allowance.

Now as to authorization by the Executive Committee the record of the last New York meeting shows that you are to make such terms

for my services as you deem just and reasonable.[13] I think this covers the matter fully and you and I agreed upon the terms at your office and I know it is not your fault that they have not been complied with. All I ask is that when an allowance is charged up to me it be with the understanding that it also covers the salary of my assistant and the upkeep of this office. And you can put this in any form you choose provided only that the fact appears in the figures as here stated. If it were not for the Socialist party I would not need to keep up an office one minute nor distribute literature and do a lot of other things at my own expense.

Pardon me for writing at such length. I have gone into considerable detail to make matters too clear to admit of any misunderstanding. After the Cleveland meeting I came to certain conclusions which I felt I must make known to the national office. I pointed out certain things I believed to be wrong and that should be changed and it may be that I am not right in all of them, and possibly not in any of them. But one thing seemed perfectly clear and does yet and that is that as long as the party will not support the national office, and as long as the national office spends more money than it receives there is going to be trouble and we will remain moneyless and correspondingly helpless, and as long as we are known to be bankrupt it will be vain for us to send out organizers under a large expense to rebuild the party. There is nothing that is shunned more than a financial failure. The moneyless treasury of the national office is the chief handicap and it can never be removed until we somehow keep our party budget within our income.

I am as always, faithfully

Your comrade,
[Eugene V. Debs]

TLc, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. The party's national office building at 220 South Ashland Boulevard, occupied in 1919, was sold to the Milk Wagon Drivers Union of Chicago in October 1922 for $36,375. The sale represented a "net profit of something over $10,000.00." *Socialist World,* June 1923.

2. $135. *Socialist World,* June 1923.

3. The meeting was held in the Cleveland City Auditorium. *Socialist World,* June 1925.

4. In "Regional Conventions. National Executive Committee Memo #3," expenses for the Cleveland meeting were listed as $1,457.63, receipts as $350.69—a deficit of $1,106.94. InTI, Debs Collection.

5. On June 11, 1923.

6. David Rhys Williams was pastor of the Congregational Church in Cleveland and a founder of the Cleveland City Forum in 1923.

7. On February 21, 1925.

8. The "Regional Conventions Memo," noted above, lists expenditures at the Minneapolis regional convention as $720.55, receipts as $73.97, and a deficit of $646.58. InTI, Debs Collection.

9. The meeting at Los Angeles showed a deficit of $140.25, the San Francisco meeting a profit of $28.41. "Regional Conventions Memo," InTI, Debs Collection.

10. There is no mention of payments totaling $7,000 to Debs in 1923 in the *Socialist World*, which regularly printed the financial statements of the national office, nor any Debs "statement giving the facts." White's report to the national executive committee, covering the period January 1 to June 30, 1923, lists $4,800 for Debs's "fees" at the "Debs Meetings" during the period. In response to inquiries from state secretaries during the year, White quoted Debs's fees ranging from $100 to $400 per meeting, so the $7,000 figure seems reasonable. NcD, Socialist Party Papers, Reel 10.

11. Arthur Baur.

12. A document, "Monies Received and Disbursed During Prison Days," in InTI, Debs Collection, lists monthly receipts from the "National Office" ranging from $50 to $250 between April 14, 1919, and December 8, 1920. No receipts are listed for 1921.

13. "Minutes of the National Executive Committee Meeting, Breslin Hall, New York City, April 28-29, 1925," p. 8. InTI, Debs Collection.

EVD to Roger N. Baldwin

June 15, 1925
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Roger Baldwin:

The communication signed jointly by you as Director and John Haynes Holmes as Acting Chairman of the Civil Liberties Union, under date of the 13th. inst., inviting me to membership on the National Committee of the Union has been received. The request honors me and compliance therewith, hereby made, is a pleasurable duty. Please accept my thanks for yourself and for Chairman Holmes for your kind consideration in the matter.

I am also in receipt of a copy of your letter to the Labor Defense Council[1] under date of the 12th. inst. and thank you for your thoughtfulness in sending it. I received urgent calls from the Council by letter and by wire to approve their announced conference[2] but I wrote Secretary Maurer[3] advising him that I could not give my approval in the face of your objections, suggesting that the Civil Liberities Union should have been consulted and also that the conference be postponed

until an understanding could be had so there would be no dissension or complication in carrying on the work. As ever,

Yours faithfully,
E. V. Debs

TLS, NjP, Mudd Library, ACLU Archives.

1. In "As to the Labor Defense Council" (*Socialist World*, March 1925), Debs acknowledged that he had agreed to serve as a vice-president of the council, which was formed by William Z. Foster and others in October 1922 to provide legal defense for workers "prosecuted . . . for their activities in the labor movement," and had agreed with the council's "fight for free speech." Now, Debs charged, "some unscrupulous communist propagandists are using my connection with the Labor Defense Council as a means of discrediting the Socialist Party by spreading the report . . . that I am really with the communists and a socialist in name only." Debs urged his readers to "turn your backs . . . on such vulgar falsifiers."

2. The Labor Defense Council (LDC) conference was held in Chicago on June 28, 1925. *Daily Worker*, June 29, 1925.

3. In a letter to George Maurer, secretary of the LDC, dated June 25, 1925, Debs told Maurer that "it will be impossible for me to attend the conference" but that if the conference agreed to cooperate with "other labor defense bodies" dedicated to the defense of "all workers . . . irrespective of their affiliation or non-affiliation, and with equal consideration for all," he was "perfectly willing that my name shall be used officially in connection with the new and larger and more effective organization." InTI, Debs Collection. Debs's greetings were read to the conference. *Daily Worker*, June 29, 1925.

Benjamin Schlesinger[1] to EVD

June 22, 1925
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Gene:

The new Forward Building[2] is all complete. It is one of the nicest newspaper buildings in the country and positively the most beautiful building owned by the labor movement.

We are celebrating the opening of the new building with a banquet at the Morrison Hotel, Saturday evening, June 27, and with a Concert and Meeting at the Ashland Auditorium, Sunday afternoon, June 28. Comrades Abraham Cahan,[3] B. Vladeck[4] and a large committee of the Forward Association are coming here from New York to participate in the celebration.

You understand, dear Gene, that no Socialist celebration can be complete without you. I therefore insist (and all of our comrades in Chicago and New York join me) that you and Mrs. Debs come to

Chicago and be our guests for this Saturday and Sunday. Of course, the Forward will stand all expenses.

Now, you are a young fellow yet and very much used to travel. You must therefore not try to get out of it. We will expect you here, without fail, Saturday morning and are making all arrangements for your hotel accommodations.

Sincerely yours,
Benj. Schlesinger Mgr.
JEWISH DAILY FORWARD

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Benjamin Schlesinger (1876-1932) was born in Russia, came to the United States in 1891, and became active in the movement to organize the garment workers in Chicago. One of the founders of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, Schlesinger was elected international president of the union in 1903, 1914, and 1928 and was business manager of the *Jewish Daily Forward* from 1907 to 1912. In 1923, Schlesinger resumed his association with the *Jewish Daily Forward* as business manager after resigning his ILGWU presidency.

2. In Chicago.

3. Abraham Cahan (1860-1951) came to the United States from his native Russia in 1882, taught the English language to New York's Jewish immigrants for a time, and in 1890 became editor of the weekly *Arbeiter Zeitung*, which printed many of his early stories of Jewish life and culture. He became nationally prominent as the author of *Yeki: A Tale of the New York Ghetto* (1896) and *The Rise of David Levinsky* (1917). His long career as editor of the *Jewish Daily Forward* began in 1897 and continued until poor health forced his retirement in 1946.

4. Baruch Charney Vladeck (1886-1938) escaped czarist jails by emigrating to the United States in 1908 and in 1912 became editor of the Philadelphia edition of the *Jewish Daily Forward*. In 1918 he became general manager of the New York *Forward* and retained that post until his death. Vladeck served two terms (1917-21) as a socialist alderman in New York City, remained in the Socialist party following the Communist split in 1919, and played a key role in securing the *Forward*'s financial support of the Socialist party during the 1920s. A lifelong socialist, Vladeck became one of the founders of the American Labor party in New York and supported Franklin D. Roosevelt in the 1936 campaign.

EVD to Benjamin Schlesinger

June 25, 1925
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Comrade Schlesinger:

The invitation you send in behalf of the Forward Association, so characteristic of you, goes straight into my heart and if you only knew how it hurts me to have to decline it on account of impossible cir-

cumstances I am sure you would relieve me of all suspicion of being remiss in my obligation to the Forward and the comrades associated with you under that proud banner. The intimacy expressed in every line of the beautiful and complimentary letter you addressed to Mrs. Debs and myself is in striking contrast with the cold formality with which such invitations are usually extended, and makes it all the more difficult for us to resist the tempting offer you make with such persuasive inducement and to keep us from entering the door of the Forward's well known hospitality which you fling wide open for our reception.

But the fact is that aside from being extremely busy clearing away the accumulation incident to my absence I am still in a physical state requiring me to keep my physical limitations in mind to avoid another collapse which in all probability would be the last scene in the final act on my little stage. It wearied me to go to Minneapolis in the heat of the past few days and the work there was quite strenuous and I still feel the strain of it, and feel obliged to conserve myself so that I shall be able to fill the St. Louis engagement next week and to keep up with the program that will take me out to California and then back to New York again in September with any amount of work in between to take up every hour of available time. Twenty years ago I could have done all this several times over when I could get along on two or three hours' of sleep a night or go without sleep entirely as I did many a time in tramping around for the labor movement, but now, for the present at least, I have to be a bit careful for my last escape was too narrow to admit of my taking chances of breaking down without due consideration of what I owe the party and the cause.

You will excuse me for going into such detail and I should not have done so in response to any other invitation. You know how I love the comrades of the Forward, how I appreciate what they have been and are to me, and with what pride and joy I behold their crowning triumph in the erection of the most magnificent Temple in the labor movement of America, and though my wife and I unfortunately cannot be with you at the dedication and Banquet you may be sure that our hearts will be with you and that we shall in spirit at least share in all the raptures and delight of the beautiful and inspiring occasion.

Please remember me with loving greetings to Comrade Cahan, Comrade Vladeck, Comrade Kramer,[1] Comrade Seskind[2] and other comrades who may be about you, and with deepest, warmest thanks from Mrs. Debs and myself for your very kind invitation, and with our love to you and through you to the Forward and to the Association

it represents and all the good comrades who are on the march and who conquer by that sign, I am as ever,

Yours loyally,
Eugene V. Debs

TLS, ILGWU Archives.

1. Samuel Kramer was managing editor of the Chicago edition of the *Jewish Daily Forward.*

2. Morris Seskind (1872-1958) founded the *Jewish Labor World* in Chicago in 1908 and edited that paper until 1919 when he joined the *Jewish Daily Forward,* which he served as labor editor for thirty-four years. *New York Times,* September 7, 1958.

EVD to Bertha Hale White

June 29, 1925
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Comrade Bertha:

The first thing I have to do this morning is to write you the letter promised you on Saturday in answer to your several letters, reports and documents addressed to the N.E.C. and myself personally under dates of the 23rd. and 26th. inst. inclusive. I spent the whole of yesterday and last evening going over these papers and over party affairs in general and I must confess to you although not in the least discouraged or inclined to give up or turn back that the party outlook is anything but encouraging.

I shall first address myself to your financial report for May[1] and to your statement in regard to the party's financial affairs under date of the 25th. I am very glad of one thing and that is that you laid the situation bare just as it is even though it reveals a worse condition than I had expected. It does not appear from this report that we have made or are making any progress at all notwithstanding we have for months appealed for support in every way we know how and have strained every nerve trying to reorganize our almost totally wrecked party. After reading this report I am almost persuaded that it might have been as well if Comrade Branstetter had carried out the intention reported by him to the N.E.C. of locking up the office, going home and letting the party die.

The great trouble is that the party has lost what can only be recovered by little less than a miracle and that is confidence. That is the one thing above all others that has blocked our efforts and neutralized and made futile our agonizing cries and appeals for help. The

great mass of our ex-members and socialists in general believe that the Socialist party is dead and that it cannot be resurrected, and I am willing to admit that on the face of it as appears from your report it looks very much that way. Mahoney expressed it grimly and with a chortle in Minneapolis the other day when he said the Socialist party is a corpse and a few dreamers are foolish enough to think or at least pretend to think that it can be brought to life again.

Now I am sure that you will not misunderstand me in speaking thus plainly in my comment on the report as you have in the report. That is the only way we will come to understand clearly just what we are face to face with and just what we have to do if we are to save the party from complete extinction. I am sure you know me well enough to know that I am not one to give up and to desert at any time, especially when nearly all others have let go and when only the few unconquerable remain at the post of duty. My only regret is my lack of physical strength. Just at this moment and for two or three days past I have been verging on lumbago and only my grim determination not to yield to the torment of it has kept me out of its grasp. I should feel myself humiliated almost to death if I had to cancel St. Louis a second time and not be able to make the California dates. The hard knocks of fifty years of fighting against overwhelming odds are coming in for an accounting but I can endure this without a flicker and go on if I but know there is any desire, any will, any pride or self-respect among enough socialists to pick our party out of the wreck of its own weakness and impotency and place it on its feet again. I foresaw enough of what we are facing to protest against being made chairman of the N.E.C., knowing I would be in no physical condition to do my duty but at that time it was urged that only my name and prestige would be needed to serve the party and bring it to life again but it appears that my name and prestige have counted for little or nothing with all that I have added to both the little within my strength to do in the way of service. I have remained here in this dead heat with the recurring effects of a sunstroke to almost sap me of my remaining strength, and keenly am I aware of what I ought to do as chairman of the N.E.C. to even partly deserve the title and how little I am doing under the circumstances.

You are quite right in saying that the N.E.C. should deal promptly and effectively with the vital World issues which confront us upon every hand but upon which the party remains silent as the grave thus confirming the general impression that the party is dead and of course a cadaver cannot be expected to function in a living world. I realize fully, as you suggest, that the N.E.C. should long before now have issued ringing declarations defining the attitude of the party in regard

to China, Mexico, Labor Defense Day, the evolution case in Tennessee of which the whole world is talking, and a score of other issues, but who is to do it? I am doing all that my time and limited strength will allow, you are doing the same and more, and so is Kirkpatrick, and so no doubt are all the rest of the members of the committee. The trouble is that the little we are able to do meets with no response. We are talking to the dead. The eager solicitation, the cheering assurances and the burning appeals you send out fall upon deaf ears and dead souls. They all want to see if the party can possibly live, looking on our efforts incredulously, without faith, to salute us if we fail with their "I told you so." If the party should live, however, in spite of them, they will come flocking to it in swarms to tell about how they stood by in its darkest hours and saved the day.

This much said let us now see what can be done, must be done, and shall be done to win this seemingly hopeless struggle, for so far as I am concerned it shall be won if I die in my tracks. I will at least add my life to the wreck if wreck it must be but it shall never be so with my consent or approval.

The only fear I now have is that the present organizing plan is going to eat up the fund given us by the Forward with little or nothing to show for it, after the assurance I gave and the attitude I took to get it. I went far enough to say that I wanted to be eternally discredited if we could not and did not do the work and make good if they provided the means. My opinion is that the organizing can't be forced or hurried along by organizers in the present situation, and I doubt if one of them, competent as they are, can carry himself and cover his expenses to the party. The fund will not last long with so many organizers in the field at such a heavy expense for each of them and if that fund is gone and we are practically no better off than now we are done for and it will be vain for us to ask or to expect any more money from anyone.

In this connection I cannot refrain from a word of comment on that item in your report to the N.E.C. dealing with the pledges made at the Chicago Banquet showing that $3414.00 remains unpaid. That disgusts me and also excites my wrath and resentment. I feel almost outraged to think that socialists have no honor, no self-respect, that their word is not good and means nothing. I should expect that from republican and democratic politicians but I cannot bear it from professed socialist idealists. It is a burning shame that that money has been withheld from you. It could be paid as well as not and there [is] no reason whatever save that alone of lack of decency and common honesty why it has not been paid. What good will it do hereafter to ask for pledges if most of them are counterfeit and never redeemed?

I almost hesitate to ask for any pledges at St. Louis, in the light of this shameful betrayal of those who led the party to believe they were coming to its rescue only to plunge it deeper in to the abyss by destroying the faith of those who suffered in a heart-breaking hour.

While upon the subject of the St. Louis meeting let me say that I hope for much but expect nothing. At best the meeting will yield financially but an insignificant part of what the national office owes and must have to keep from giving up the ghost.

Now the very first thing I feel called upon to do in answer to your report is to cut off every dollar and every penny, so far as I am able, in our expenditures that can be cut off without positively hamstringing the national office, and to this end I wish you to please submit the following three motions in my name to the N.E.C.:

First, that in anticipation of and preparation for the American Appeal soon to appear further publication of the Socialist World be suspended.[2]

Second, in view of the depleted condition of the treasury of the National Office there be no further rebate for the present in the dues of language federations.[3]

Third, in view of the fact that there is no money in the treasury of the National Office, that there are no funds with which to pay International Dues and no funds to meet obligations soon due which cannot be extended, the delegates to the coming International Congress be withdrawn or if they attend said Congress they be required to do so at their own expense.[4]

As to the third and last motion here submitted you say in your report that at the last meeting of the N.E.C. $800.00 was voted to cover the expense of delegates. That is a surprise to me. I did not know of this action and it must have been taken in my absence. Nor have I any recollection of seeing any mention of this allowance in the report of the proceedings of which I have not now a copy at hand. But of course the action was taken or it would not appear in your report. In any event, however, I cannot imagine that any comrade would go to Europe on a pleasure trip at the expense of the party when it is gasping for breath. We can far better get along without representation at the coming Congress and confess frankly that we can't afford it, that we are bankrupt financially at least, than to agree to pay $800.00 for representation when we cannot even pay our International dues. If I went to Europe under the circumstances it would certainly be at my own expense and not that of what now appears to be a pauper party facing obligations it cannot meet and threatened with the loss of the last vestige of its credit.

If there is no material change in financial affairs between now and

September I shall certainly move to reconsider the convening of the N.E.C. in New York in September unless it be with the understanding that each member defray his own expenses. The meetings of the N.E.C. have cost us a great pile of money[5] and I cannot think of any corresponding good they have done to the party. For myself I would rather trust you and your associates at the national office to take care of the situation and to meet demands until we have overcome our insolvency than to spend thousands of dollars adding to the burden that is crushing us for N.E.C. meetings with enormous railroad and hotel expenses, and pratically barren of results.

In closing I have but to add that whatever betide or however long or trying the struggle I am unalterable in my determination to do my little part, to help you to the full extent of my ability in facing and dealing with the situation.[6] I realize that you above all others are in the most unenviable situation, that it is you upon whom all demands are directly made and that upon {you} more than all others the crushing burden rests, and I wish you to know now as never before that I shall stand by you with all the strength I have and all the resolute purpose of which I am capable until the battle is won and the party is once more on the road to power and victory.

Believe me with perfect faith and confidence and with all loving greetings and warmest wishes,

Yours to the end of the road,
[Eugene V. Debs]

TLc, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. *Socialist World*, July 1925.

2. The *Socialist World* announced (July 1925) that "with this issue the *Socialist World* will suspend publication . . . in anticipation of the early publication of the *American Appeal*." The first issue of the *American Appeal*, with Debs as editor, appeared on January 1, 1926. The *Socialist World* continued publication until October 1925.

3. The party's language federations received a rebate of 9½ cents on each of the 25-cent monthly membership stamps sold. The rebates totaled $1,309 in 1924. *Socialist World*, March 1925.

4. At the April 1925 meeting of the national executive committee in New York, an expenditure of $800 was authorized to help defray the expenses of five delegates to the International Socialist Congress, to be held in Paris on August 19-25, 1925. *Socialist World*, June 1925.

5. In her financial report for 1924, made to the party's national convention in Chicago in February 1925, White charged $1,951.25 to five national executive committee meetings held during the year. *Socialist World*, March 1925.

6. In a mail ballot, Debs's motions concerning the suspension of the *Socialist World*, language-federation rebates, and expenses for delegates to the International Socialist Congress in Paris carried. *Socialist World*, July 1925.

Norman Thomas to EVD

July 1, 1925
New York City

Dear Comrade Debs:

I have just received your note with regard to the Chinese situation.[1] I hope to be in a position to work on it and to furnish rather more and better information than is at present at my disposal. I have a cable from Paul Blanshard,[2] our field secretary, stating that there are 200,000 strikers in Shanghai alone; that the strike will continue for many weeks; that there is very little Russian money; that the strike is against the 12 hour day and child labor; (children of five and six work in the mills) and for the right to organize.

Blanshard urges American labor to send relief. A local relief committee has been formed of responsible Chinese and communications can be sent to W.Z. Zung, Emissarieus, Shanghai.

My suggestions are: (1) The Socialist Party {should} endorse and actively promote this appeal for relief; (2) It {should} demand a withdrawal of American gunboats and military forces and demand from our government a refusal to shed the blood of American boys to fasten the tyranny of American capital on China. Missionaries and business men in China are there at their own risk and must depend upon the protection of the Chinese themselves, protection which can be won by genuine service. The best of the missionaries have already taken this position; (3) The Socialist Party should appeal to the labor parties throughout the world to take a similar position; (4) The Socialist Party should demand a Conference for the revision of treaties which puts China in bondage to foreign powers. As more developes I shall send you further word.

Perhaps {at} a little later date I will have time and information to put this in a more definite shape, but I send it now for what it is worth.

Fraternally,
Norman Thomas
Executive Director[3]

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. In May 1925, a strike by Chinese textile workers in Shanghai against their Japanese employers was followed, during the summer of 1925, by a general strike and boycott by Chinese workers against other foreign employers and an outpouring of support and sympathy for the strikers by labor and socialist leaders around the world. The strikes and boycott were viewed as "a resounding cry of protest against

imperialism in China." James E. Sheridan, *China in Disintegration* (New York, 1975), 150-55.

2. Paul Blanshard (1892-1980) was field secretary of the League for Industrial Democracy, an associate editor of the *Nation*, and until 1933 an active socialist supporter of Norman Thomas. His article "China Goes on Strike" appeared in the *New Leader* of September 5, 1925. In his later years Blanshard was noted for a series of books attacking the Catholic church, including *American Freedom and Catholic Power* and *Communism, Democracy and Catholic Power.*

3. Of the League for Industrial Democracy.

EVD to Charles E. Ruthenberg

July 13, 1925
Terre Haute, Indiana

Dear Comrade Ruthenberg:

Your communication under date of the 6th. inst.[1] forwarded from Chicago, came into my hands this morning and has had careful reading.

Answering I have to say that we have now pending before the National Executive Committee of the Socialist party a statement similar in substance and purport to the one submitted by you, declaring the attitude of the party toward the Chinese situation, and until this is disposed of I can give you no definite decision as to my position. I may say however that considering the relations existing between the two parties[2] and the spirit which characterizes such relations, I should deem it futile, to put it mildly, to attempt to pledge them to united and harmonious action upon this or any other matter.

Yours fraternally,
[Eugene V. Debs]

TLc, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. As secretary-treasurer of the Workers party, Ruthenberg wrote Debs on July 6, 1925, to urge that the Socialist party join the Workers party in a "united front to fight intervention in China" and in support of the striking Chinese workers. InTI, Debs Collection.

2. The Socialist party and the Workers party.

James P. Cannon[1] to EVD

July 15, 1925
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Comrade Debs:

I was very much gratified indeed to receive your letter of July 10th confirming your previous endorsement of the I L D.

The launching of such a movement as this has been in my mind for many years and the response it is getting from all sections of the working class, especially from men like yourself who have been in prison or who are confined there now, gives me confidence that the movement will grow quickly and will become a real power for the defense of persecuted workers and for the support of their dependents. The need for such a movement as the I L D is even greater than we had at first anticipated. Since the holding of the National Conference on June 28th[2] and its attendant publicity we have been receiving letters almost every day from unknown and neglected prisoners and their families, and heavy obligations are piling upon us. That only means that we must work harder and broaden the scope of our activities to arouse the labor movement to unity and action in behalf of its persecuted fighters.

The main problem as I see it is to construct the I L D on the broadest possible basis. To conduct the work in a non-partisan and non-sectarian manner and finally establish the impression by our deeds that the I L D is the defender of every worker persecuted for his activities in the class struggle, without any exceptions and without regard to his affiliations. It is my aim to direct the work along this line. The whole national conference was animated by this spirit and I am sure it is yours too.

I appreciate the fact that your time is fully occupied for the remaining months of the year. But in spite of this I trust that you will find the way to assist us by a certain minimum of active participation in the work of the I L D.

I will keep in touch with you and inform you regularly of the developments and problems of the organization and will greatly appreciate your advice and suggestions. It would be especially valuable if you could find time to write us a short article which we could send out in our press service. And if you happen to be in Chicago in the near future I would like very much to have a talk with you about the work.

Our main energy is concentrated at present on the building of the organization. Our plan is to launch it on a big scale by holding local

conferences in all the main cities of the country simultaneously on Sunday September 13th, at which time local units will be established. Mass meetings are to be held in all these cities in the evening following the conference. If we carry out this project successfully it ought to have an electrical effect upon the movement.

Copies of our press service will be sent to you regularly. Will keep you informed about the progress of our organizational campaigns as well as of the other activities which we are developing.

Best wishes to you,

Fraternally yours,
International Labor Defense
J. P. Cannon
Executive Secy.

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. James Patrick Cannon (1890-1974) was an organizer for the IWW before World War I and a socialist who left the party in 1919 to join the Communist Labor party and edit its paper, the *Toiler.* He later served on the national executive committee of the Workers party and in 1925 organized the International Labor Defense (ILD), which was viewed as the party's legal arm. In 1928, Cannon was expelled from the party for his Trotskyite position, later helped organize the Socialist Workers party, and was one of the members of that party convicted and sentenced to prison terms for violation of the Smith Act in 1940. Among other writings he published *The First Ten Years of the Communist Party* (1962) and a pamphlet, *Eugene V. Debs: The Socialist Movement in His Time; Its Meaning for Today* (1967). *New York Times,* August 23, 1974.

2. As noted, Debs did not attend the Labor Defense Council conference in Chicago but sent his greetings. Nonetheless, he was elected to the national committee of the ILD, which was organized at the conference. *Daily Worker,* June 29, 1925.

EVD to Lincoln Phifer

August 13, 1925
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Comrade Phifer:

My brother and I have just returned from California after a strenuous campaign in the interest of the Socialist party out on the Pacific coast. As there was no one here to attend to our correspondence an enormous mass of letters confronts us and we are now trying to clear the decks. Your good letter has been carefully read and if only I had a bit of a chance I would write you at considerable length for there is so much in your letter that interests me and appeals to me and that I would like to go over with you in detail. But alas! I am soon off

again, being engaged in a campaign of party reorganization which takes me from coast to coast and will keep me occupied until the latter part of October. During this period I have to practically give up my personal correspondence as there is not the ghost of a chance to keep it up.

I can readily understand why Capper[1] concluded to dispense with your services. If you had followed in his compromising footsteps and been willing to suppress what should be exposed you would still be drawing your weekly salary.

The paper[2] we are to start is not to appear until January and I hope it may be possible to see you in person to talk over some matters in connection with it for there is no one who has had the experience you have whose counsel and judgment would be more appreciated by me. The trouble with us is lack of funds. The party was financially bankrupted and plunged into debt and all but destroyed during the war. We shall win out but it will be a hard, long and trying fight.

I note with interest all you say about each member of your family and I am glad indeed to know that Mrs. Phifer and the children are all well. You have good reason to feel proud of your children for they are all making their way honorably in life. I think of you and of your precious family circle and your hospitable home at Girard many times, and how often, how very often, my mind and heart return to the days and hours we sat so near each other and worked and planned and dreamed together in such beautiful, inspiring, heart-warming harmony and fellowship.

There are many things I vividly remember about our association but there is one in particular that will not be forgotten. You remember that on one occasion it required all my combined professional skill and attentiveness to rescue you from a perilous situation. You remember also that shortly afterwards I presented a moderate bill for my highly distinguished professional service, but you do not remember, nor do I, that bill ever having been paid, and I feel sure it cannot be charged to a lapse of memory. I can only hope when next I have the opportunity to feel your pulse and look searchingly into your eyes there will be no twitching of the fingers or the palm to indicate that the cure was not a perfect one.

For the present this must be all. I would give much to take you by the hand again and to go with you over the old trails. Let us hope!

Please remember me in all kindness to Mrs. Phifer and to your

dear children as you have occasion to see or write to them and believe me to the very last breath,

Yours lovingly and faithfully,
Eugene V. Debs

TLS, Eugene V. Debs Foundation, Debs Home.

1. As noted, Lincoln Phifer had worked on Arthur Capper's *Kansas City Kansan.*
2. The *American Appeal,* to which Phifer would contribute a regular column.

John Haynes Holmes to EVD

August 27, 1925
Kennebunk Beach, Maine

Dear Comrade Debs:

The New York papers announce that you are coming in to the metropolis this fall to help our good friend, Norman Thomas, in his campaign for the Mayorality.[1]

This is good news for the city—and I hope also for my church! For isn't this the chance we have been waiting for, for you to speak in my pulpit?[2]—I assume that you will come in toward the latter part of October—i.e., toward the climax of the campaign. If so, won't you arrange to accept my invitation, herewith joyfully tendered, to speak at the church on the evening of *Sunday, October 25th?* This would be a Forum meeting, you know, when you could talk about the campaign, or anything else that is near your heart.

Let me hear from you if this can be arranged.[3]—you know how earnestly I have wanted to receive and welcome you all these years—and how earnestly I hope, therefore, that this at last is the hour.—

I trust that you are in the best of health these days.—Please give my warmest regards to Mrs. Debs—and remember me also to that splendid brother of yours.—with unabated affection and reverence, I remain, as always—

Very sincerely yours
John Haynes Holmes

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. The *New York Times,* August 22, 1925, reported that Debs would speak in New York City in support of Norman Thomas's campaign for mayor at three Thomas rallies on October 11, 13, 15, 1925. Running a distant third, Thomas received about 39,000 votes. *New York Times,* November 5, 1925.
2. Community Church.

3. In "Debs—Lover of Men" (*Unity*, November 15, 1926), Holmes described the three times he had met Debs, not including a 1925 appearance at Holmes's Community Church.

EVD to Upton Sinclair

August 31, 1925
Chicago, Illinois

My dear Upton Sinclair:

Since receiving the manuscript of your novel, "Oil"[1] in the several installments that have come to me through Theodore and sent to me by you direct, I have been kept so busy that I have had no chance to look over it though I have been most anxious to do so. I have not yet been able to clear away the accumulation of mail consequent upon my long absence out on the Pacific Coast, and since then I have had to address a number of meetings at Terre Haute[2] and here and I have been so fully occupied otherwise that I have had not a moment to look over many of the documents that have been here awaiting me and especially your novel, which of course I intended should have precedence over all else. On leaving Terre Haute on Friday last to come here to preside over the Regional Convention and address a Mass Meeting I have brought your Mss with me and I have placed it with comrade George R. Kirkpatrick in the office here, explaining the matter to him in connection with your desire that your novel be published serially in the American Appeal[3] when it appears, a proposition most generous on your part and certainly most gratifying to me as I need hardly say it has my hearty approval. Comrade Kirkpatrick will examine the manuscript as soon as he can and I shall see him about it again when I return here and we will go over the matter together and endeavor to carry out your wishes. Meanwhile you may be sure the manuscript will be well taken care of.

I am addressing a Mass Meeting of Striking Garment Workers[4] here this morning. I hope this finds you well as usual, and all your work prospering.

With cordial greetings and every good wish, I am,

Yours always,
Eugene V. Debs

TLS, InU, Lilly Library, Sinclair MSS.

1. Sinclair's *Oil!*, published in 1927, dealt with speculation and corruption in the oil industry and government. Banned in Boston, whose authorities were offended by its frank references to birth control and other sexually explicit matters, the book was considered one of Sinclair's best novels.

2. Debs spoke at the Indiana Federation of Labor convention in Terre Haute on August 27, 1925. *Terre Haute Tribune,* August 28, 1925.

3. Sinclair's *Oil!* did not run in the *American Appeal;* instead, his *Letters to Judd* ran as a serial in the paper, beginning January 1, 1926.

4. Against the International Tailoring Co. of Chicago.

EVD to Labor Temple Association of Terre Haute

September 11, 1925
Terre Haute, Indiana

Dear Brothers in the Cause of Labor:

The honor you have conferred upon me in placing the fine bronze Portrait[1] of me at the entrance to the Labor Temple in recognition of my humble services touches me beyond measure and nothing I could say would convey to you any adequate expression of my appreciation.

It has always been to me not only a pleasure but I have always felt it to be my duty to serve the cause of organized labor in any and every way in my power, and to realize in such a gratifying manner as you have made it possible for me to do, that my efforts have met with such generous recognition and appreciation as your action has made so eloquently manifest, is compensation to me in rich and overflowing measure, and from the depths of my heart I return thanks to your Association and to each member, and with all wishes for your increasing prosperity and achievement in the great cause to which your activities are consecrated, I am as always,

Yours fraternally and faithfully,
[Eugene V. Debs]

TLc, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. The plaque, inscribed "In Honor of Eugene V. Debs April 1, 1925," was dedicated on August 29, 1925. *Terre Haute Tribune,* August 30, 1925.

"An American for America" to EVD

September 25, 1925
New York City

Debs!—
You want to hear the truth. Well here it is. Your a liar, thief, bandit, traitor & murderer. Youre not fit for American Citizenship & ought to be deported, & if you don't shut up, you will be or you'll wake up in—Hell. Beware! You are playing with fire when you provoke the American Eagle. *You are violating your parole.*

An American for America.

[Theodore Debs note on envelope]
This from an American *patriot* without the courage to sign his name.

Theo.

AL, InTI, Debs Collection.

EVD to Lucy Robins

October 9, 1925
New York City

Dear Comrade Lucy,
We shall be here the next two or three days and very busy with our meetings, but I hope to have the pleasure of a visit with you while in the city. I have never forgotten and never can forget your kindness and your loyal devotion to the working class prisoners, myself in particular, during the dark days in Atlanta.
Believe me always
Lovingly and gratefully

Your comrade
E. V. Debs

ALS, InTI, Robins Papers.

EVD to Theodore Debs

[October 17, 1925]
Scranton, Pennsylvania

Dear old Pard:

Here is where they were going to mob me—sent me telegraphic warning not to come—the papers & press dispatches all carried the report that the meeting would not be permitted & that I would be arrested etc etc—the Am. Legion, Ku Klux, Junior Order of Mechanics, Chamber of Commerce and all the rest of the nervous joined in the Anti-Debs demonstration & swore by all the gods that I shouldn't speak. Then they decided if I spoke they would have a committee put a lot of questions to me as to my Americanism. The Mayor[1] was a Dandy & said I should be protected & had his cops on hand. Well by god, just as I predicted when the showdown came the damned cowards failed to show up & this morning the rest of the Community are calling them damned asses & laughing at their jackasserie. We had a grand meeting—the audience went wild & we organized a big local & sold all our literature & this morning I'm not only a patriot but a hero. The audience nearly mobbed me with enthusiasm & I could hardly get out of the hall.

Pls. send Bennett Gruber[2] Cedar Ave at Birch St. Scranton Pa 1 Hollings—1 D.C. & 1 Red Ap. Folder and the same as above to Edward A. Wieck[3] 213 West Lincoln St. Belleville Ills.

Speak at {Brownstown}[4] to-morrow with two comrades here from England & then leave for home—Will reach home Tuesday morning finer than a fox. It has been a great trip all around & the party is coming grandly to the front.

Love & a swish
Gene

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. John F. Durkan (1875-1967) was mayor of Scranton, Pennsylvania, from 1921 to 1925 and noted for his sympathetic policies toward striking miners and other workers in the Scranton area. *Scranton Tribune,* September 6, 1967.

2. The Scranton city directory for 1925 identifies Gruber as owner of the Gruber Motor Car Co.

3. Wieck was secretary-manager of the Illinois Coal Sales Association. *W.P.A. Index to Belleville Newspapers 1840-1940.*

4. Pennsylvania.

EVD to Lucy Robins

October 18, [1925]
New York City

Dear Lucy,

Just returned from Scranton and your telegram has been received. I speak here to-day and have to leave on the evening train for the West. I hope to have at least a glimpse of your face before leaving. You know I can never forget, but must always gratefully remember your loyal devotion and your many, many kindnesses and services during the prison days. Not hearing from you in answer to my first note I also addressed you at *Room 305, 287 Broadway or 144-2nd ave.* I have had so many callers and the address given in your letter but could not get in as everything was locked up.

I have been busy, beseiged, almost a prisoner ever since I've been here—so many visitors, telephone calls, engagements, etc., or you would certainly have seen me had I been able to locate you. I'm having to leave for home to-morrow but shall try my best to call on you again before leaving.

With love and all grateful remembrances I am as ever

Yours faithfully
E. V. Debs

ALS, InTI, Robins Papers.

EVD to Rose Pastor Stokes

October 19, 1925
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

My dear Rose Pastor Stokes,

The days that have passed since last we met have not dimmed the radiance of your fine soul, and I drop you this line of loving greeting to you this morning that you may know I remember gratefully your loyal devotion in the days that were dark and trying, and that I hold you, as all do who have the privilege of knowing you, as a lofty, courageous, noble-hearted woman and a consecrated soul in the service of humanity.

Believe me, dear, brave, comrade, always

Yours faithfully
Eugene V. Debs

ALS, CtY.

Murray E. King to EVD

October 20, 1925
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Dear Comrade Debs:

I feel inexpressibly honored and happy and moved by a grave sense of responsibility over my appointment as managing editor of the American Appeal.

I fully sense how much I owe you for this supreme opportunity of my life-time to do something highly useful and creative. I cannot thank you and the members of the National Executive Committee adequately in words. I can thank you only by giving my whole-hearted co-operation in making The American Appeal the greatest socialist propaganda paper in the world.

When the message came of my appointment I was just starting on a commercial venture with a good comrade in Milwaukee. Largely in my behalf, he put $500 into the project. I will endeavor to reimburse him in service between now and the time you will need me.

I will start for Milwaukee tomorrow. Edna and the little boys are there now. Our address is *162 Juneau Avenue, Milwaukee, Wis.*

Fraternally,
Murray E. King

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

EVD to Upton Sinclair

October 24, 1925
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Sinclair:

Returning from the eastern states after a strenuous speaking campaign I find your letter of the 5th. inst. with copies of yours to Kirkpatrick of the 29th. ult and the 5th. inst. awaiting me, and I have just finished careful reading of the same. I hope you have not grown impatient over my long delay. It is simply impossible in my present situation to give personal attention to my correspondence and I either have to give up all attempts to keep up with it or quit the road, one or the other. It is physically impossible for me to meet all the demands of both. I have not had the ghost of a chance to look over the

manuscript of your novel, nor of the scores and scores of other articles, documents etc. etc. that come in a steady stream from all directions.

Since my return, thoroughly tired, I have been busily engaged in clearing up the accumulation here but it cannot be done in a very satisfactory way for I {am} soon off again and shall be during the next two or three months, holding meetings and filling speaking engagements as the most necessary work at this time to keep the party alive.

I am unable to advise as to your novel for the reason that I have no chance to go over it or to familiarize myself with the conditions under which you wish it published. From present indications there will be no funds upon which we can draw to pay for articles, although I should be ashamed to think of accepting your work without at least half decent compensation for it. I should have no objection to what your communist might say against the socialists or the Socialist party or what kind of a plea he might make for communism or for the soviet government.[1] I believe in free speech to the uttermost and I can think of no circumstances under which I would feel inclined to muzzle a character in your novel.

You have doubtless been informed ere this that Murray King, of Minneapolis, has been appointed as Managing Editor.[2] I have great faith in his judgment in such matters and since it is impossible for me to give the matter personal attention I shall have to refer it to him and Comrade Kirkpatrick jointly, relying upon them to come to an understanding with you that will be mutually satisfactory. Comrade Kirkpatrick is not now on the paper but I shall certainly favor his selection for important editorial service when the paper gets started.

I have a number of speaking engagements in December but expect to get to Chicago in time to have my part in launching the paper and getting it under way. I would like to give the paper my entire time from the beginning but the condition of the party, critical as it is, and urgent as its demands are, makes this impossible at least for the present, and so we are having to do the best we can under the circumstances with the hope that within another six months or a year the party will once more be functioning normally in its various departments.

I am asking Comrade Kirkpatrick and King to decide in the matter of your novel as soon as Comrade King arrives at Chicago, and I sincerely hope the decision may be favorable and satisfactory.[3]

Yours fraternally,
E. V. Debs

P.S. I quite recently finished another careful reading of "Mammonart,"[4] a most wonderful production and I think perhaps your greatest achievement. That work is monumental and will have a permanent place in the world's emancipating literature.

TLS, InU, Lilly Library, Sinclair MSS.

1. One of the characters in *Oil!*, Harry Seager, supports the Communists in their conflict with socialists and argues that the famine in Russia is caused by droughts, not by communism.
2. Of the *American Appeal.*
3. As noted, Sinclair's *Oil!* was not published in the *American Appeal,* in which his *Letters to Judd* ran as a serial in the first issues of the paper.
4. Sinclair's *Mammonart: An Essay in Economic Interpretation* was published in 1925.

EVD to Rose Pastor Stokes

October 27, 1925
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Comrade and Friend:

The little message from you just received in response to my note touches me very deeply. We are perhaps none of us as strong and courageous as we sometimes appear but when the trying and testing experiences come,[1] as they will and do, we at least have each other to comfort and sustain us in our crucial hours and to keep alive the faith that after all life is well worth the living and that somehow the things that perplex us, the struggle we have with the fates, must work out right in the end.

You may be sure, dear Comrade Rose, that those who love and understand you are near you now as perhaps never before and that if for the moment the road seems dark and weary and the clouds hang low, the sun must surely shine again to light the new and better way, and what now seems as cruel adversity will but strengthen you for greater service to the cause that is your life, and add fresh lustre to your radiant soul.

It does not matter how widely our view-points may be at variance in these days of readjustment and realignment[2] the time will come when we will again stand beneath the same banner as we have in the past and meanwhile, whatever betide, I beg you to believe me always

Faithfully your friend and comrade,
Eugene V. Debs

P.S. Please take no trouble to answer this.

TLS, CtY.

1. Charging "misconduct" and "infidelity," J. G. Phelps Stokes won a divorce decree against Rose Pastor Stokes in a Nyack, New York, court on October 17, 1925. Rose Pastor Stokes did not contest the divorce but told the press that "profound political differences" were responsible for the breakup of her twenty-year marriage. *New York Times*, October 18 and 19, 1925.

2. The *New York Times*, October 18, 1925, reported that on the day of the divorce decree, Rose Pastor Stokes was "addressing a meeting of the Workers Party of America, which advocates the principles of communism."

EVD to Upton Sinclair

October 31, 1925
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Sinclair:

I have just finished a second reading of "Mammonart" one of the very few books I have ever found time to read a second time. It is a wonderful book and must be an eye-opening one to many of the artists, writers and others who serve the leisure class in everything they do but indignantly resent the idea that there is any propaganda in their work.[1] What libraries of books you must have gone through to have produced such a work and I marvel how you did it along with your numberless other intellectual activities. I would like very much an inscribed copy of "Mammonart," simply your name in it in your own hand for my little collection of the immortals.

Check enclosed

Yours always,
E. V. Debs

TLS, InU, Lilly Library, Sinclair MSS.

1. In *Mammonart*, Sinclair argued that "all art is propaganda, whether political, social, economic, or religious" and cited the world's major writers to illustrate his thesis. *Book Review Digest*, 1925.

Morris Hillquit to EVD

[November 5, 1925]
[New York City]

EUGENE V. DEBS,

HEARTY GOOD WISHES ON YOUR SEVENTIETH BIRTHDAY.[1] FEW MEN HAVE MADE BETTER USE OF THEIR LIVES THAN YOU; FEW MEN HAVE

FOUGHT MORE VALIANTLY FOR THE COMMON GOOD; FEW MEN ARE LOVED AS DEEPLY AS YOU; NONE HAS EARNED THE LOVE OF HIS FELLOWS AS MUCH AS YOU. MAY YOUR ENOBLING EXAMPLE INSPIRE OUR LIVES AND SUSTAIN OUR STRUGGLES MANY MORE YEARS.

MORRIS HILLQUIT

Telegram (copy), WHi, Hillquit Papers.

1. Debs's seventieth birthday fell on November 5, 1925.

EVD to Morris Hillquit

November 13, 1925
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Morris:

The beautiful and touching telegram from you came to me while seated among our comrades at the banquet at St. Louis[1] and was read amidst applause that would have compensated you in some measure at least for your loving birthday remembrance. It was perfectly fine in you to remember me, busy as I know you to be, with such a loving, appreciative and heart-warming message, and I only wish I but half deserved it. But anyway I am glad you think as you do and shall try my best to give you no cause hereafter to think otherwise. How I wish you and Mrs. Hillquit could have been with us!

With loving greetings to you both,

Always yours faithfully,
E. V. Debs

TLS, WHi, Hillquit Papers.

1. Debs's seventieth birthday was celebrated at a number of banquets in November and December 1925. The St. Louis banquet, attended by Debs and his wife and Theodore Debs and his wife, drew a crowd of 500 "comrades" who heard Debs's commitment "to humanize the human race, to civilize civilization, and to Christianize Christianity." *St. Louis Post-Dispatch,* November 6, 1925.

EVD to George R. Kirkpatrick

November 13, 1925
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear "Kirk":

Yours of the 5th has just had a second careful reading. I see no conflict between the two paragraphs you quote from my letter of the

2nd. in regard to Snow and Stille[1] and the handling of their respective meetings. I still say that Snow wrote me that he had an understanding with the National Office and that after paying my fee he was to divide fifty-fifty the profits of the several meetings. This he confirmed last Sunday in a personal conversation at Nokomis. Now why this should conflict with my further statement that if Snow and Stille choose to divide their proceeds with the National Office, that {it} is their affair, and I cannot see that I have anything to do with that. Nor can I understand why, in the matter of these meetings, "there would seem to be at least some connection between your (my) lecture work and the National Office in addition to the possibility that Comrade Snow may see fit to divide the profits of the meetings with the National Office."

Now I am assuming that Comrade Snow is as good as his word and that if there are any profits to divide he will certainly act in good faith and pay to the National Office exactly what it is entitled to, but here we have simply another instance of the almost constant friction and ill feeling made manifest in the financial settlements of engagements made with local organizations under the auspices of the National Office. I do not know why this should be so and I certainly do not blame the National Office but it is anything but agreeable and assuring to hear of the suspicion as to the integrity of those managing meetings and their proneness to withhold from the National Office what is coming to it. It would seem that for {some} reason not easy for me at least to understand the National Office cannot book me or arrange meetings for me without the fear of being taken advantage of and deprived of its due in the matter of financial settlements, and it is certainly a regrettable matter that it should be so.

I now quote as follows from your letter: "She (Bertha) also directed me to say that if she was to construe it as you suggest she would, of course, have to publish all hitherto unpublished payments which would include the tour of 1923, and which would amount to a total of $10,000. and this she thought she must refuse to do."

And why refuse? Certainly not on my account for there is nothing in my transactions with the National Office, financial or otherwise, that needs covering up—unless it be to save the party. I shall want an itemized statement as to that alleged ten thousand dollars and I shall then have something to say in regard to the matter of allowance made, barely enough for living expenses, that included not only myself but Theodore and the upkeep of our office here, and this covering the whole period of time since my release from prison in December 1921 and all the service I rendered the party during all that critical and trying period when I was assured that so much depended on me.

On my release from Atlanta I was offered all kinds of lecture inducements which would have netted me a fortune and made me economically independent for life, and I refused them all and went to work for the party, after its funds, raised largely on my account, had been recklessly spent, for just barely enough to live on and sometimes not even that.

Several hundred thousand dollars rolled into the National Office while I was in Atlanta, on my account and for my benefit, but I never claimed nor received a dollar of it.

Now I do not know what I am charged with in the account of the National Office in the way of allowance but I do know what I received and I know it does not tally with any $10,000.[2] charge. If Otto Branstetter were alive he would tell you that never in a single instance while he and the National Office were managing my meetings did I accept the full amount of what was due me, or even the full amount he tendered me under our agreement and arrangement. In the settlement of the Pacific coast trip in 1923 as we were nearing Chicago he handed me a check covering what was due me on the trip. I had him tear up the check and write another for $300. less than the amount of his check with the understanding that the $300. was to be turned into the treasury of the National Office along with the rest of the proceeds of our meetings. The proceeds of these meetings approximated $40,000., out of which I received a paltry $1,300., and here let it be stated that every dollar I received was out of my own earnings and out of my own meetings, and not one dollar of it ever came out of the treasury of the National Office. You will therefore see that Comrade White is at perfect liberty to publish the full report of what I received and not only this but I wish it to be done and think it should be done in justice to the party, and I wish it distinctly understood that if anything has remained "unpublished," as stated in your letter, it is on account of the National Office and not on my account.

Now in connection with Comrade Stille's meetings and the allowance you have made him as organizer in behalf of the National Office, I confess I am a little surprised at the point raised by you, though you may be entirely right about it. The reason I am surprised is that you should think the hundred dollars you have sent him for organizing services to have been misapplied on account of his managing the banquets in his state. In the light of the splendid work he has done, the almost phenomenal service he has rendered in reorganizing the party where all others had failed, and for which no one gave him as much credit as yourself, I think the National Office could well afford to pay him that one hundred dollars even if he rendered no specific

service in return, but has he not {been} organizing and building up the party in working day and night to arrange for these meetings? If he is not organizing and building up the party in that work then I must confess that I do not know what kind of work could be properly called organizing. The primary and in fact the sole purpose of those meetings is to reorganize and build up the party, local, state and national, to boom the American Appeal and to do all else that an organizer is expected to do to serve his purpose and earn his salary, and if Stille has been remiss in any of that I am not aware of it, but if you think he is not entitled to that one hundred dollars and that it ought to be returned to the National Office I will speak to him about it and see that the refund is made.

Now in reviewing these matters, I wish you to know, dear old scout, that I am deeply sensible of the perfectly fine spirit in which you have presented them, and I wish you to know moreover that even if we cannot see some of these things just alike there need be not the slightest misunderstanding, nor the least abatement of mutual confidence and good faith, to which it should be added that I appreciate fully, as I always have, the perfect frankness with which you have presented these matters and others of a more or less similar nature relating to party affairs, on previous occasions.

All the rest of your good letter delights me. I am more than gratified with the fine appreciation you express of Comrade King. I felt quite sure you and he would at once take to each other. You and he can make the American Appeal all that it is expected to be and all it should be, and I shall of course do the little I can to help along, regretting only that the sheer want of physical strength compels me to take a back seat when my heart so yearns to be at the front where the actual work is done. I am very glad you had the forethought to write Comrade Hillquit in regard to the selection of the Business Manager. I hope he will be chosen in time to speak to the comrades and to the public in general through the last issue of the Socialist World,[3] as you suggest. It is very necessary this should be done.

I am very glad you like my American Legion article.[4] I am pretty strongly inclined to "puff up" over such generous praise as you bestow upon my simple offerings.

Now as to making the Appeal "burn, flash, flame, scorch, build, persuade, convince and inform," there is not a comrade or other person in the whole movement who is your equal at that very thing. You are {the} editorial writer of this peculiar and distinctive type, par excellence, and you will achieve your real reputation when you have a free hand as you will have on the coming Appeal.

And now responding to the closing paragraph in your letter in the

same beautiful spirit in which it was written, I do understand you perfectly as one human ever understood another; I have the fullest, completest faith in you in every way; I appreciate beyond expression all the loving, thoughtful solicitude with which you have treated me, and I have for you the deep, abiding affection and loyalty which prompts me to subscribe myself,

Yours to the last turning of the road,
[Eugene V. Debs]

TLc, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. As noted, William R. Snow was state secretary of the Socialist party in Illinois. Samuel Harden Stille was an organizer for the Socialist party in the Northeast District at the time. His articles on "Organizing for Socialism" appeared in the *New Leader* (March 21, 1925) and the *American Appeal* (February 5, 1927). In a letter to Debs dated June 4, 1926, Stille thanked Debs and enclosed a promissory note for a $200 loan, which Stille promised would "restore my physical health and bring my mind back to its former alertness." InTI, Debs Collection. The *Socialist World* (October 1925) announced that Snow and Debs were "midway in the series of ten big rallies downstate in Illinois" and that Stille was "preparing for ten big Debs meetings in upstate New York."

2. See EVD to Bertha Hale White, June 11, 1925.

3. In "The Managing Editor's Message" (*Socialist World*, October 1925), Murray King expressed his hope that the *American Appeal* would "become a new Appeal to Reason."

4. In "The American Legion of Saviors" (*Chicago Socialist*, November 14, 1925), Debs charged that the American Legion had "set itself up as the custodian of the Constitution, the guardian of patriotism, and the embodiment of one hundred per cent Americanism in the United States," recalled the Legion's efforts to prevent or disrupt his speeches and its attacks on others, and repeated his contention that "nine out of ten of these strutters and swaggerers were made 'heroes' under compulsion."

Theodore Debs to Joseph E. Cohen

November 27, 1925
Terre Haute, Indiana

Dear Joe:

Yours of the 20th. came in due time. I am disappointed, very much so. Gene's disappointment will be quite as keen. We had hoped that you might see your way clear to let your name go before the N.E.C. I feel that you would have had the hearty endorsement of the Committee and I am certain that no better selection could have been made. I know just how you feel {about} it. Gene has always harbored a like feeling. When the Social Democracy was organized he was selected Chairman of the Board with a fixed salary, not a very large

one, $75. per month, but he refused to draw a penny of it; and while he travelled the entire year in the interest of the party he paid his own expenses and sent what money he could raise to the national office. During a period of six months at the same time, working for the party, I drew an average pay of $18. per month, paid $20. flat rent, and borrowed enough money to feed my wife and baby. I merely mention these things so that you will at least know we have some appreciation of your view point in the matter of taking office. I still hope you will change you mind and let your name go before the Board. The party needs some one with poise, judgment and understanding and you would fit the office of secretary-treasurer as if it had been made for you.

Faithfully yours,
Theodore Debs

TLS, NNU Tam, Debs Collection.

EVD to Karl Kautsky

December 4, 1925
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Comrade Kautsky:

It was well worth while to have a birthday just to receive so fine and cheering and complimentary {a} message as the one from you and dear Mrs. Kautsky which I now hold in my hands and which fills my heart and dims my eyes. Each kind, comradely word you have written touches me, and coming from no other source could such a generous expression of greeting and congratulation give me greater satisfaction.

It was from you, dear comrade, that I learned some of my earliest and most precious lessons in socialism, and I have always felt myself in debt, gratefully and with a deep sense of appreciation, to your gifted pen for having opened my eyes to the light which guided me into the socialist movement. I was in jail, one of the innumerable victims of capitalism, sitting in darkness as it were, when your pamphlets first came into my hands and your influence first made itself felt in my life, and I have since wondered often how any one, however feeble and benighted mentally, could read your crystal-clear Marxian expositions and interpretations without becoming and remaining a socialist.

It is a great joy therefore and an honor I esteem beyond words,

in which my beloved wife Katherine shares gladly, to receive from Karl and Luise Kautsky such a flattering testimonial of regard on the occasion of the anniversary of my natal day. I only regret that I am as sadly deficient in my German as you are proficient in your English or I should with pride and pleasure return the compliment of making this acknowledgment in your native tongue.

It so happens that these lines in regard to your flattering recognition of my birthday are written on the one hundred and fifth anniversary of the birth of my revered father who in life, to its latest breath, with my brave and beautiful mother, stood staunch and true in the service of the socialist movement.

I note with special interest what you say about the movement in America and feel confident that you are right in what you say of the situation and the outlook, and that in time your words will prove to have been, as they have so often in the past, prophetic.

And now thanking you both with a full heart and wishing length of years and increasing fulfillment of your highest hopes and aspirations, in which Katherine and my brother Theodore and his wife and all of our household join heartily, I am always

Faithfully your friend and comrade,
Eugene V. Debs

TLS, International Institute of Social History, Kautsky Papers.

EVD to Emanuel Haldeman-Julius

January 4, 1926
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Haldeman-Julius:

First of all, though a trifle belated, a Happy and Prosperous New Year to you and Lady Marcet and the junior gods of the household! And next I want to thank you for the fine things you have said about me in the current issue of your Weekly in your answer to the question as to what had become of the pre-war radicals.[1] I appreciate all this fully and I have certainly not forgotten and can never forget what you did to secure my release from prison. With most of what you had to say about the pre-war radicals I am in hearty accord but there are some things which I cannot understand and with which I am not at all in agreement.

Your characterization of Wilson suits me exactly.[2] History will pillory him as the arch-betrayer of the American people. It is now known

beyond a doubt that he was for the war, that is, for putting this country into the war from the very beginning and that his "neutrality" was a sham and false pretense. He allowed himself to be elected president for "keeping us out of war" when his mind was fully made up to put us into the war and he did commit that monstrous crime within six months after his election. He would have dumped us into the diabolical slaughter sooner had he dared to do so.

During this time he continually voiced with tongue and pen the semi-socialistic and idealistic platitudes which won for him the confidence of the masses. Coming from his lips these glib mouthings were the veriest flapdoodle. At heart he was an aristocrat and autocrat and he tolerated no equals in the sphere in which he was the central luminary and all others had to be satellites to reflect his majesty and glory. He had no real friends but only sycophants, lackeys and underlings. He promptly fell out and insulted those of his official associates who presumed to approach him on a basis of equality. He gave expression to the true Wilson when he was still President of Princeton College and in a baccalaureate address to the students denounced and condemned labor unions and the labor movement in general for "making unprofitable servants for their masters." Then, following this lead, he applied to Andrew Carnegie to place him on his pension roll of retired pedagogues.[3] That was the real Wilson and he did not change after he was elected president, his first act being to insult and deny his campaign manager who had sacrificed everything to elect him and did more than {any} other to make him president and who later, in a series of articles written before his death, in which he felt that he must tell the truth to the American people, he told the sordid story of Wilson's base ingratitude and his utter lack of personal honor or political self-respect.[4]

So far we are in perfect agreement. I now take up the points of divergence upon which I am inclined to think we are wide apart.

You refuse to forgive Sinclair[5] for having at the beginning of the war been misled into giving his sanction and support to that criminal slaughter. You repeatedly say in effect that all the atonement he has since made counts for nothing. He made a mistake and according to you he is apt to make another and he has therefore forfeited the confidence of the people for all time. This seems to me a very strange statement coming from you and I cannot at all understand it for I am not inclined to believe you are putting Sinclair in the pillory as a discredited leader from any personal bias, although that seems to be the only ground upon which it can be accounted for. Sinclair made a mistake, I readily admit, but he has since frankly confessed his error and done everything in his power to make amends for it, and should

he now be forever damned for doing what thousands of other men good as you and I are, were also guilty of but {who} have made no {such} expiation as stands to Sinclair's credit? You have made mistakes and so have I, plenty of them, and I expect to make a good many more, but I should certainly not consider myself fairly treated if my friends condemned me and forever denied me their confidence on that account.

But this is not all. You have set Sinclair down as a false adviser and a discredited leader. While at the same time you hold up Clarence Darrow[6] as a true leader of the people and avail yourself of every opportunity to glorify his leadership. I do not object to this but I wish to point out the glaring inconsistency, to say nothing of the injustice of your position. You will not misunderstand me, I know, in regard to Darrow. I love him and with good reason. For many years he has been my friend, loyal and steadfast, and I have been his, and no one rejoices more than I to hear his merit, his splendid qualities of character, his crowning virtues appraised at their true value.

But Clarence Darrow was a super-patriot during the war. He plunged in headlong from the very beginning as one of Wilson's leading champions in saving civilization and making the world safe for democracy. He even went to England as Wilson's personal representative to give eloquent and convincing assurance of Wilson's greatness and glory and of the patriotism that inspired the American people to make common cause with "God save the King" and God damn and slaughter the common cattle.

You did not condemn and do not now condemn Darrow for that and neither do I. You do not exile him as a false leader who has made a mistake and will therefore make another and is therefore unworthy to ever again be trusted by the people.

I do not understand this in Darrow; it has puzzled me and perplexed me, I confess, not a little, but I would never have dreamed of damning him for it for an instant, to say nothing of forever.

Now if you can tolerate a mistake in Darrow and continue to trust him with leadership, why not Sinclair? Darrow's mistake was far greater than Sinclair's, in my opinion, for he was far more active in whooping it for Wilson and the war than Sinclair was, and he has never pretended for a moment that he was mistaken or that he had the slightest inclination to make atonement.

Quite the contrary. He still regards Wilson, whom you denounce as an arch-hypocrite and betrayer, as almost a Messiah. In his speech in his debate at Denver a few days ago he justified his patriotic attitude during the war and then threw in this choice compliment, according to the report in the Rocky Mountain News: "I revere the name of

Woodrow Wilson above almost any other name on earth." How does that strike you? For the life of me I cannot understand it, and I do not think you can understand it any more than I can. No such sublime faith and supreme adulation for the Woodrow Messiah can be charged to Sinclair.

In the same speech Darrow said there was one thing worse than war and that was the tyranny of centralized power. And yet at the last national election when Darrow's friends confidently expected he would give his support to LaFollette who had fought that power all his life he coolly championed the cause of Davis, the darling of that centralized power, the tool of Wall street, than which there is no more tyrannical, criminal and corrupt power on the face of the earth. How do you account for that? I simply can't and don't try to. Nor do I permit it to interfere with my love for the man, nor my confidence in his integrity, nor my faith in his leadership in other directions.

I have often wondered about some of Darrow's attitudes and actions but they were his own and I have not felt called upon to judge him by my standard and to condemn him accordingly.

No one has ever been able to classify Clarence Darrow and I am quite sure he would not be able to classify himself. He is simply not of the classifiable kind. He is neither {a} republican, nor a democrat, nor a progressive, nor anything else in politics. I know for a fact that he hates politics and politicians and yet somehow he is always lined up with them and is {as} active in their campaigns as any of the rest of them. He has often been called an anarchist and as such he has no use for politics or politicians; he does not believe anything worth while can be accomplished by either and he has said this often enough to dispel all doubt upon that point. And yet, somehow, and to me it is simply inexplicable, in every political campaign he is found in the democratic camp, lined up with the rottenest politicians, office-seekers and spoils-hunters, whooping it up quite as zealously and patriotically as if he were one of their most loyal leaders. He has never supported a socialist ticket or a socialist candidate for office and although he has all the years of his active life denounced and condemned the capitalist system and exposed the rottenness of its misrule he regularly, when a political campaign comes on, gives his unqualified approval and support to that system by giving his splendid talents and his great influence to the utterly rotten democratic party, so-called which supports that putrescent economic, political and social system.

And now let me ask you, my dear Haldeman-Julius, how you can condemn Sinclair for his inconstancy and false leadership without at the same time condemning Darrow. For my part I want neither condemned. I recognize in them both men of great qualities of mind and

heart and soul; men who have achieved great and lasting good in the service they have rendered to struggling humanity, and neither of whom should be branded as unfit for further counsel or leadership because there are some things about him we don't understand or he does some things we cannot approve.

You have toleration enough to bear with Darrow who crowns Wilson as a Messiah while you yourself hold him to be the basest of betrayers, a spirit of forebearance entirely commendable, but I venture to suggest that this same spirit be shown to others who certainly have offended to no greater extent.

I did not mean to write at such length but when I read your article I felt moved to write you frankly in regard to it and this must be my apology, if any be necessary, for inflicting a very busy man with such a long communication.

With the greetings of the season and all good wishes to you for the future I am as ever,

Yours sincerely,
[Eugene V. Debs]

TLc, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. In "What Has Become of the Pre-War Radicals" (*Haldeman-Julius Weekly*, January 27, 1926), Haldeman-Julius noted that "most of the pre-war radicals (there were glorious exceptions, particularly Eugene V. Debs) went over to the Wilsonian 'ideals,' " but "Eugene V. Debs stood like a rock. He went to prison to his glory."

2. In his article, Haldeman-Julius called Wilson "that arch-hypocrite."

3. In a front-page story on December 5, 1911, the *New York Sun* disclosed the fact that soon after his resignation as president of Princeton in 1910, Wilson had applied for an annuity retirement grant from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

4. William Frank McComb (1875-1921) was a New York City attorney who played a key role in securing Wilson's nomination and election in 1912. Shortly before his death, he published a series of syndicated articles critical of Wilson and his chief advisers. *New Day*, October 15, 1921.

5. In his article on prewar radicals, Haldeman-Julius recalled that Upton Sinclair "surrendered to Wilson's hocus-pocus." After the war, Sinclair "came back to his prewar radicalism, but it was too late. He had been put to the test—and he had been found wanting."

6. Darrow was listed by Haldeman-Julius as one of a "score of radicals and liberals who went over to Wilsonian militarism."

B. Charney Vladeck to EVD

January 5, 1926
New York City

PERSONAL

Dear Comrade Gene:

The enclosed check is the second installment of the Debs Testimonial Fund which we have been raising in connection with your 70th birthday.

At the last meeting of our Board of Directors, at the initiative of Comrade Schlesinger, we again discussed the relation of the fund to you and we have decided unanimously to convey to you the following:

A great number of the comrades and sympathizers who are contributing to this fund are under the impression, rightly or wrongly, that this fund is for your personal use and is not to be turned over to the Party.[1] Although we have repeatedly stated that it is up to you to do with this money whatever you please, we feel that some of the contributions wouldn't be as generous if not for the assumption on the part of the contributors that this money will be used by you for your personal needs so that you have no worry about things of the world and are in a position to devote all your energy and ability to the cause to which you dedicated your whole life. For this reason we wish to ask you to accept this check for yourself as well as all other checks that may be forthcoming.

As to the pledge we have made to the Socialist Party, our Board of Directors are willing to include our pledge in our budget for 1926 and to pay it from the treasury of the Forward which means that every cent raised by the Forward for the Debs Testimonial Fund should go directly to you, without you turning it over to any other but your personal use,—the Forward reimbursing the party from its own funds.

This action of our Board of Directors is to come up before the next meeting of the Forward Association for approval but I have no doubt that the comrades of the Association will take the same view. If they should not, I shall write to you again.

With very best regards and wishes for a Happy New Year, I am,

Very truly yours,
JEWISH DAILY FORWARD
B. C. Vladeck
General Manager

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. The total amount given to Debs by *Jewish Daily Forward* readers and supporters

is not known, but in a letter to Debs dated May 20, 1926, George Kirkpatrick wrote that "the Forward Association gave you between 15 and 20 thousand dollars." InTI, Debs Collection. In Debs's letter to Vladeck dated January 16, 1926, Debs thanked him for a $3,000 check, and in a letter to Debs dated February 13, 1926, Vladeck enclosed another check for $5,000 and said, "Very shortly I will send you another check for $3,000.00." InTI, Debs Collection.

EVD to W. S. Van Valkenburgh[1]

January 15, 1926
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Comrade Van Valkenburgh:

Your communication of the 6th. inst.[2] with copies {of} correspondence between Emma Goldman, the London Herald and others, came during my absence from the city. Since my return there have been illness and death in our family[3] and my office work has in consequence been subjected to enforced neglect, and this will account for my belated acknowledgment of your kindness.

In answer to your inquiry I should be glad to have any further articles or letters you may receive from Miss Goldman and are disposed to let me have.

I took this correspondence home with me that I might give it careful reading, which I have done, and I now beg to write you briefly in answer. First of all let me say that I have always had the highest personal regard for Emma Goldman whose high ability no one who knows her can fail to recognize, and I have always had perfect faith in her integrity as a leader in the revolutionary movement of the working class. I am not an anarchist but I have sufficient sense of decency and breadth of vision to recognize all those who are conscientiously serving the proletarian cause according to their light, and giving them credit accordingly.

During all her years of service in this country, Emma Goldman stood staunchly always on the side of the struggling workers in every battle and for this she was hated, feared and persecuted by the exploiting capitalists, their prostituted newspaper scribblers, their tools in public office, and all the rest of their minions and mercenaries.

I blush to think of the brutal and shameless manner in which this great soul, {this} self-sacrificing woman was treated by the United States government. Her farcical trial and her cruel deportation will leave an indelible blot on the pages of American history. I protested to the limited extent of my power but I was myself in the toils at the

time with but little chance to wage any effective opposition to the cowardly performance of the Hessians, the self-styled "one hundred percent Americans."

And since Miss Goldman's deportation it appears by this correspondence[4] as well as by other reports which have filtered through, that she has been treated even more brutally where she should have been received with open arms and treated with the most generous consideration.

I was quite surprised when the first reports came from Russia about the experience of Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman under the Soviet government. I never for a moment suspected that they would be other than welcome guests of that government and of the Russian comrades in general. That they would be harshly treated and indeed persecuted and forced to leave the Russian borders was a distinct shock to me.

I never personally met Berkman more than once and that was for a few moments only in the Warden's office when we were both inmates of the federal penitentiary at Atlanta. But while I saw little of Berkman personally I knew the man and his record and I always had and have now the highest regard for him for he has always been a brave fighter for the working class, and how any proletarian government could persecute such a man as Berkman and such a woman as Emma Goldman passes my understanding.

Nor am I able to understand why the London Herald should have refused to give space to her story. No matter what Miss Goldman's statement may set forth it is certain that it is reliable and can be depended upon for she is a truthful woman and would never set down anything that is false even to vindicate herself.

Certainly the radicals and socialists, as well as the communists and anarchists, should know the truth about affairs in Russia as well as elsewhere, and if the statement made by Miss Goldman is true, and I do not doubt it, then there is certainly something that is radically wrong with the policy of Soviet Russia in dealing with those who are not in accord with its program.

I have heartily favored Soviet Russia from the hour it was born and have supported it with my pen and from the platform to the full extent of my power, but I have been utterly opposed to the cruel Soviet policy which has proscribed the expression of opinion and made a crime of all honest opposition. I have protested against this in various ways and shall continue to do so as long as this pernicious policy is pursued, which is not only outrageously cruel to its victims but reflects most discreditably upon the government guilty of such atrocities, and

all the less excuse is there for such a repressive and subversive policy under a proletarian government.

I realize of course the absolute necessity of protecting the government and its institutions against counter-revolution in all its forms but there is a sharp line which may be readily recognized between a counter-revolutionist and an honest dissenter or opponent. There are today thousands of men and women in Russian prisons or exile, undergoing the most fiendish torture, who were brave fighters in the revolution which overthrew the Czar, many of whom knew the inside of the prisons for their opposition to the Czar and their loyal devotion to the people. All this is so well known that the wonder to me is that this cruel and reprehensible policy of the Soviet government have not long since been abandoned, not only in common decency and humanity, but for the sake and to the credit and advantage of the government itself.

Perhaps one of the reasons is the unfair suppression of truthful reports of conditions, as in the case of Miss Goldman, who at least in England, where freedom of opinion and expression is supposed to be most advanced, might have expected fair hearing in the interest of truth and understanding, and for the benefit of all concerned.

When you have occasion to write to Miss Goldman or to Alexander Berkman, please remember me to them with cordial greetings and all good wishes as personal friends and as comrades in the common cause.

Thanking you for your kindness which is very much appreciated I remain

Yours faithfully,
[E. V. Debs]

TLc, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. W. S. Van Valkenburgh (d. 1938) was a journalist and close friend of Emma Goldman and headed the Emma Goldman Memoir Fund. The fund, which Van Valkenburgh raised out of a New York office, helped to support Goldman during the writing of *Living My Life.* Candace Falk, *Love, Anarchy, and Emma Goldman* (New York, 1984), 344.

2. Van Valkenburgh's letter to Debs, January 6, 1926, enclosed an Emma Goldman letter to Havelock Ellis, "a two-page article submitted to the Daily Herald which was rejected . . . together with a letter to Mr. Hamilton Fyfe, Editor [of the *Daily Herald*]." Van Valkenburgh added, "Needless to say, none of the material appeared in the Daily Herald." InTI, Debs Collection.

3. Debs's wife's half-sister, Amelia C. Beach, was killed in a car accident in Terre Haute on December 30, 1925. *American Appeal,* January 9, 1926.

4. In Goldman's letters to Havelock Ellis, November 8, 1925, and to Hamilton Fyfe, November 15 and 24, 1925, she described instances of Soviet oppression, com-

pared the Soviets to the czarist regimes, and asked why English liberals and others failed to criticize the "tyranny" of the Soviet regime. InTI, Debs Collection.

EVD to Claude G. Bowers

January 16, 1926
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Claude Bowers:

The good letter from you under date of the 6th. was read with keen interest and full appreciation. We have been reading all about the phenomenal sale and success of your work on Jefferson and Hamilton and we have been immensely gratified by it. You have been making steady progress as a historian since first that splendid work on the Orators of Ireland[1] came from your gifted pen, but your Jackson book brought you fame over night and this has been made overwhelmingly by your latest historic work.[2]

I am ashamed to have to admit that I have read neither your book on Jackson[3] nor your later work but I shall certainly do so as soon as I can possibly find the time. When your Jackson book appeared I was ill and for more than a year I did not know whether I would last from day to day, and since then I have been so extremely busy travelling about and trying to catch up that my substantial reading has been shamefully neglected. I shall read your books first and then I want to go through Carl Sandburg's Lincoln of which I have read a part. I suppose you know Sandburg. I sat with him in the jungle in his backyard when he was engaged in this work. He comes nearer bringing the real Lincoln to us vividly, his own breathing self, than anyone who has ever written about him. Sinclair Lewis, Carl Sandburg and I had some happy hours together when I was under treatment at the sanitarium at Elmhurst, where Sandburg lives. There are also two or three books of Dreiser's especially the big one just out,[4] that I must have as soon as time will allow. The trouble is I am on the road so much and when I am back there is such an accumulation that it keeps me busy until it is again leaving time.

In your letter you have a line that struck me very forcibly and I have been thinking a good deal about it ever since. You say: "Socialists as a rule appear to look contemptuously on everything political before their party came into active being." You are absolutely right in regard to many socialists, perhaps most of them, and this is one of the reasons why there has never been the kind of a socialist movement in this country there should be and would be if it were rooted in American

traditions, American history and American conditions. The fundamental principles are of course everywhere the same but there is a different psychology in every nation, different economic and political conditions, and these have not been wisely reckoned with by socialists or they would be much farther along with the American movement.

We have traditions peculiarly favorable to socialist development and we have history of like nature which unfortunately is almost wholly unknown. History writers in the past have ignored the common herd. They have not deemed the people of sufficient historic importance to write about. McMaster[5] took a new departure in his history of the people of the United States and he has many facts and details of the most vital importance of which there is no trace in Bancroft[6] or any of the other so-called standard histories.

I know you are very busy but I wish it were possible for you and "Jim" Oneal, Editor of the New Leader of New York to have an hour or two together. I have written him at some length about you and your work and I have asked him to send you an article written by him some time ago entitled "An Early American Socialist."[7] I have also asked him to send you a copy of his "Workers in American History." You will find both interesting, especially the latter in which there is history that has not only been ignored but covered up and suppressed by other writers. I know your method of history writing is your own and that it is different from the standardized writer, and the same is true of "Jim" Oneal who would really be a great historian if he had the chance to devote himself to that line of literary work. He used to work in the rolling mill here and possibly you remember him. He had little schooling but has a wonderful mind, especially for history and he has dug up more vital American history from the workers' point of view than anyone else I know. You will see by his history, although a modest volume, and done at night after a hard day's work, that he also understands the philosophy of history and the reason of Hegel's generalization that "We learn from history that we learn nothing from history."[8]

I feel quite sure that you would find Oneal very well worth while and that you and he would be mutually {enlightening and} inspiring. If some time you have leisure enough to see him call him on the phone, the New Leader, 7 E. 15th. st. And by the way, have you ever been at Rand School? The New Leader has its office in the Rand School and you would find a visit there worth your time. Oneal would be delighted to show you through. There is a special department there containing my books, letter-files, scrap books, pictures etc. which I made a gift to the School. I wish you might let the fine people there know you. Sam A. De Witt, the beautiful and brilliant Jewish poet is

associated with Oneal on the Leader. I have just given the title of your history to a woman visiting here from Chicago and recommending that she read it. She will purchase the work immediately upon her return and give it careful reading.

I thought of you while in New York, you may be sure, but as usual there I was whipped through without half time enough to go around. I intended one afternoon to call you but had an engagement to have a picture taken at the lower end of Coney Island. They assured me it would take a couple of hours. It took all afternoon and until so late at night that I could make no calls before having to leave.

By even mail I am sending you copies of the paper we have just started.[9] Let me say in closing {about your last history} that I do not think any book published in recent years, if ever before in this country, drew such overwhelming praise from such a great variety of competent critics. And this is monumental achievement and rare and enviable distinction.

Cordial greetings and warmest wishes to you and Mrs. Bowers from Mrs. Debs and Theodore and his wife and

Yours always
Eugene V. Debs

TLS, InU, Lilly Library, Bowers MSS.

1. *The Irish Orators: A History of Ireland's First Fight for Freedom* was published in 1916.

2. As noted, Bowers's *Hamilton and Jefferson* was published in 1925.

3. *The Party Battles of the Jackson Period* was published in 1922.

4. Dreiser's *American Tragedy* was published in 1925.

5. As noted, John Bach McMaster's *History of the People of the United States from the Revolution to the Civil War* (1883-1913) was hailed for its emphasis on social and economic history.

6. George Bancroft (1800-91) earned the reputation as the nation's leading historian following the publication, in the 1830s, of the first volumes of his ten-volume *History of the United States.*

7. Oneal's "An Early American Socialist" (*New Leader,* December 26, 1925) praised Orestes Brownson (1803-76), a mid-nineteenth-century religious leader and social reformer, for having "formulated practically every principle" later embodied in the Communist Manifesto. A new edition of Oneal's *Workers in American History* was published in 1925. *New Leader,* August 29, 1925.

8. "But what experience and history teach is this—that peoples and governments never have learned anything from history, or acted on principles deduced from it." *The Philosophy of History* (New York, 1956), 6.

9. The *American Appeal.*

EVD to B. Charney Vladeck

January 16, 1926
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Comrade Vladeck:

The very kind letter from you in behalf of the Jewish Daily Forward, enclosing your check for three thousand dollars contributed to the Debs Testimonial Fund by Forward readers, under date of the 5th. inst., should have had earlier attention but, as stated in my note of two or three days ago, there have been sickness and death in our family and the demands upon my time on account of launching the American Appeal have been so great that much of my correspondence has been subjected to serious neglect.

The kindness, generosity and whole-hearted devotion of the Forward readers and comrades have been so great in planning this wonderful and highly complimentary Testimonial Fund and carrying it into execution, that I feel myself completely overwhelmed and there are no words at my command to give adequate expression to my appreciation and gratitude.

That such a gracious and generous testimonial, wholly unsolicited and unexpected, should come to me is in itself of infinite value to me, even though not a dollar nor a penny had been added to it, and I must confess to feeling quite humble as I contemplate such a rare and enviable distinction and how little I feel myself worthy of such extraordinary consideration.

The Jewish Forward and its readers have always had a warm place in my heart and we have marched together in daylight and darkness, in tempest and sunshine these many years, and the same is true of the members of the Workmen's Circle[1] and the various Jewish trade unions and organizations, and these comrades have been a source of strength and inspiration to me which I have found nowhere else in the labor movement.

Everywhere these Jewish comrades and their families, including the dear little children received me with open arms, brought me flowers and cheering messages, treated me to the hospitality of their homes, and out of their poverty lavished riches upon me more precious by far than all the gold ever mined in the world. They gave me freely their confidence, their trust, their love, a most sacred possession to me, and I would rather lose my life than to forfeit the good faith and the affectionate devotion of these beautiful, loyal and wonderful comrades.

I therefore beg you, Comrade Vladeck, to make return in any way

you may deem proper of the deepest thanks of my wife and myself and my brother and his wife and all of our household to each and every reader and comrade of the Forward for this magnificent testimonial and this great-hearted contribution to the Testimonial Fund, a fund that will be sacred to us and every dollar of which it will be our purpose to use in a way that directly or indirectly it will serve the great cause to which we are alike consecrated and for which we would gladly give the last red drop that courses in our veins.

I shall never be able to repay you good comrades even in part for what you have done for me, not only in the matter of this love-inspired Testimonial Fund but in the faith and confidence you have implanted and made strong in me in the innate goodness of the human heart and the inherent nobility of human nature, which has enriched my life beyond expression and made it possible for me to realize the joy of giving myself to the last throb of my heart and the final breath of my body to the working class, the men, women and children who toil and suffer in their {tragic} struggle for life and freedom.

And now with renewed expression of my gratitude and with love and deathless devotion to each and all to whose generosity and fidelity I am indebted for this priceless gift, I remain as ever

Faithfully and sincerely your comrade,
[Eugene V. Debs]

TLc, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. The Workmen's Circle was a Jewish labor fraternal organization with headquarters in New York City and more than 700 branches in the United States and Canada. The organization celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary in 1925, at which time it claimed 85,000 members, mostly needle-trades workers, who were served by its schools, lyceums, lecture programs, libraries, and insurance coverage.

W. S. Van Valkenburgh to EVD

January 21, 1926
Chicago, Illinois

My dear comrade Debs:

It was splendid indeed of you to write me at such length as you did in your letter of January 15th.

I was more delighted to receive your letter than to learn that you had received mine with enclosures because these could easily have been duplicated; while a letter like yours is a rare treat in this man's country.

I am sure that your regard for E.G. is reciprocated—few indeed of those who think are able to agree entirely with other thinkers—but the saddest part of the situation is that not enough are able to rise above their own personal prejudices and grant sincerity to those who honestly differ.

In my own humble opinion that E.G. is one of the outstanding women of modern times; certainly the United States has never produced a woman approaching her intellectual attainments and, although she was persecuted and misrepresented by the Press, this very fact has had much to do with her ability to surround herself with friends and supporters whose loyalty means much more than that of the populace ever can.

You have no occasion to offer apologies for what you were unable to do during those troubulous times when you were already in prison and she was on the way. After all, as we look back upon those days, we can afford to philosophize upon their counterpart in other historical periods.

I was not at all surprised to learn of the conditions she found in Soviet Russia; rather, I would have been surprised had they turned out to be different. As a matter of fact, E.G. and Berkman did not fare so badly in the beginning, and had they behaved themselves I do not think matters would have reached such a serious state as they did. The strangest part of it is that they should have been so blinded in their enthusiasm as to have expected greater liberty under a Proletarian Regime than is usual under the rule of an Upper Class. It is not for me to chastise either those who went to Russia as sheep go to the shambles, or those who went as the unsophisticated woman to the Altar in the expectation of reforming through love and devotion, that which is irretrievable.

I really think that the Anarchists went to Russia in the hope of finding a haven of relief from persecution, under which they have been subjected in Capitalist countries, either went there with their eyes open or as plain damn fools. If I may say it, the experience of the Anarchists with Socialists in power should have been sufficient reason for those who believed in no Government at all to have foreseen what might have been expected under the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. As a matter of fact, I think Heywood summed the matter up in a nut-shell, in his debate with Hillquit[1] some years ago, when he said that he would prefer to be tried under a Capitalist Judge with some intelligence than before a Working Class Judge without it, or words to that effect. You see, dear comrade, that there are many angles to this question of mingling oneself with the mob; it is one thing to sympathize with and appreciate the lot of the Lower Estate

but it is another thing to be willing to place one's destiny under the yoke of Plebian mastery; and it is beyond my comprehension how a confirmed Anarchist could rise to that state of enthusiasm where his liberties would be placed in the hands of another man and so you see the reason why it was not surprising to learn that the atmosphere of Russia soon became too oppressive for either E.G. or A.B. to longer remain there. Neither was capable of silence when it was time to speak, and they certainly found ample opportunity to speak and speak they did; with the result that E.G. has had to make an inventory of her valuations, while Sasha[2] has exposed the Bolshevik Myth.

I am under the impression that Mr. Fyfe,[3] Editor of the London Herald, had more pressure behind his refusal to bring out E.G.'s article than merely his own opinion for, of course, you know that Britain has been flirting with Russia for some considerable time and has an employment problem on her hands of such formidable dimensions that she cannot afford to pass up a single opportunity for an outlet of her manufactured goods if she intends to remain the dominant power in world affairs she has been ever since the hold-up of India. This is only my opinion, but no country so geographically situated as England, and so beset with an overplus of women; depending entirely upon her colonies for raw materials and sustenance and foreign markets for a continuation of trade, can afford to ignore the impending disaster of too great an unemployment problem. Above all other Social questions, I believe the unemployment problem is paramount and I believe Marx believed it too and Kautsky surely laid maximum stress upon the certainty of the industrial crisis arriving immediately upon the tail of that industrial period when prices and wages are highest and everybody wants to buy.

The conditions in England, being as they are, may explain the London Herald's attitude for E.G. has been harassed by Agents of the "Tcheka"[4] ever since her arrival there and they have left no stone unturned to make her political status more hazardous than it is under a temporary arrangement for her presence in that country. Englishmen do not like the truth, any more than the people of any other country, especially when it is likely to affect the interior decorations of their pocket-books.

I think you are much better fitted to reason out what is wrong in Russia than I, for you have been dealing with matters of this nature since long before I was weaned and for me to undertake my own explanation were like unto the student who would teach the teacher.

However, here is the place where the Socialists and Anarchists part company. No Government can afford to tolerate serious objectors to its existence and the measure of one's safety under any Government

is guided very largely by the breadth of his vision and the sound of his voice. I do not make the mistake in believing that under a Socialist Government[5] there would be greater opportunity for an Anarchist to live and thrive than under the reign of the Roman Church. It is not from Man we have anything to fear—it is only the institutions he builds that wreck havoc on Humankind—and to destroy those institutions seems to me to be about as noble a cause as one may dedicate to be his purpose in life; and the greatest of these institutions, because it is the one that protects all the others, is the State.

We have to be frank with ourselves, dear comrade, and not be carried off our feet by faith in the fallacies of our fathers. Looking facts straight in the face may not be so pleasant as ignoring them, but it is certainly more conducive to an intelligent conception of what the future holds in store.

One must be very careful in whom confidence is placed and perhaps he is wiser who imposes no confidences at all, for the veterans of other days have lived to see many friendships destroyed through faithlessness and misunderstanding, cowardice and deliberate maliciousness, for no apparent purpose at all, and I am reminded of an instance that happened not more than two years ago, right here in New York, when a woman who, herself, risked her liberty during the war, openly and violently denounced E.G. on a public platform as the paid hireling of predatory interests, who had sold the cause of Labor for a mess of porridge,—but more of this another time.

Most assuredly, I shall convey your best wishes to E.G. and, to this end, I have had a copy of your letter transcribed and sent to her and I am sure she will acknowledge it if she thinks it as fine as I have tried to make clear to you that it is to me.

Sincerely,
W. S. Van Valkenburgh
342 Madison Av.
New York N.Y.

P.S. Thanks for the complimentary copy of your Speech and the "American Appeal."

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. The debate between Morris Hillquit and William Haywood on the use of sabotage and political action versus direct action was held at Cooper Union in New York City on January 11, 1912.

2. Alexander Berkman.

3. Hamilton H. Fyfe (1869-1951) was an English journalist and author who edited the *Daily Herald* from 1922 to 1926. Under Fyfe's leadership, the *Daily Herald*, published by the Labour party and the Trade Union Council, grew in circulation from 130,000 in 1922 to 450,000 in 1926.

4. The first in the succession of Russian counterrevolutionary security agencies, the Cheka was created in December 1917 and during the next five years earned a sinister reputation by carrying out arrests, imprisonments, and executions of a wide variety of alleged enemy agents, agitators, dissidents, and opponents of the Soviet regime. Formally abolished in February 1922, the Cheka was succeeded by the OGPU, which became the chief security police agency.

5. In a letter to Van Valkenburgh dated January 28, 1926, Debs wrote that "I can hardly agree that Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman should have expected the kind of treatment to which they were subjected under the Soviet government of Russia" because there were "other ways of dealing with counter-revolutionists." Debs added, "I cannot agree with you at all that anarchists would be necessarily proscribed, banished, or silenced under a socialist administration. That certainly would not be my kind of socialism in power." InTI, Debs Collection.

Bartolomeo Vanzetti to EVD

January 30, 1926
Boston, Massachusetts

Dear Comrade E. Debs:—

I am indeed ashame and remorseful of my long silence with you—a silence filled with love and remembrances, for, I think of you every blessing day of my life.

I have been translating, from Italian to English, "Selected Pages of The War and the Peace," by J.P. Proudhon;[1] and I wish to finish it before the C's decition. And this is the reason, or better, the cause of my silence.

The book is magistral; it will be, if such thing is possible, a real blow, not to the war, but to its very causes. You will received a copy as soon as it will be possible to send you one. I am confident that you will like and approve the book, and forgive me. But, please, do not mention this in your answer: the cat shall not know of the cheese, else, they will spoil it worstly than the rats.

Of the case, of the brave, great argument of Mr. Thompson,[2] I will not speak, because you are surely informed—and have read the brief of exemption.

Are you felling well now? This is what I hope and wish with all my heart.

Give my regards to all of your family—to you, my comrade and Maestro, all my love.

Always yours;
Bartolomeo V.

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Pierre-Joseph Proudhon (1809-65) was a French libertarian socialist whose writings became the basis of much radical and anarchist theory. His *La Guerre et La Paix* was published in 1861.

2. William Goodrich Thompson (1864-1935) joined the Sacco-Vanzetti defense in 1923 and served as chief counsel through various appeals lasting until 1927. Thompson's appeal for a new trial for Sacco and Vanzetti was denied by the Massachusetts Supreme Court in May 1926. In the "Debs Column" of the *American Appeal* on March 13, 1926, Debs reviewed the Sacco-Vanzetti case and repeated his charge that the two men were being persecuted for their radical opinions.

EVD to Mrs. Edward H. Weber

February 3, 1926
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Mrs. Weber:

Your good letter of the 1st. inst. was received this morning. I appreciate fully your interest in social and economic questions and would gladly answer you in detail, giving you such data and information as are available here, but unfortunately I am having to leave and my time is so completely occupied that I can only make inadequate and I fear sadly unsatisfactory answer to your interrogatories.

Allow me to suggest that you write to Marx Lewis,[1] Secretary of Victor L. Berger, House of Representatives, Washington, and ask him "How great a proportion of the social legislation sponsored by the Republican and Democratic parties has originated in socialist party platforms." Mr. Marx is exceedingly well informed upon this subject, has ready access to the sources of information and will be able, I am sure, to give you a good approximation upon the subject. You are of course at liberty to use my name if you wish and say to Mr. Marx that you write at my request, he being a personal friend.

If you will write to Josephine Conger,[2] Woman's Column American Appeal, 2653 Washington Blvd., Chicago, she can and I am sure will be glad to tell you what women have been the greatest leaders in the American movement.

As to the effect the war had upon the socialist movement it all but crushed it by the governmental exercise and encouragement of brute force, including assaults, and mobbings and almost every imaginable form of repression and persecution. Socialist meetings were prohibited, socialist newspaper offices were invaded and sacked, only three or four of several hundred surviving; speakers were assaulted, kidnapped and even murdered, while meetings were broken up and ruffians in uniform rode roughshod through peaceable socialist pa-

rades. The Socialist party was reduced to a shadow of its former self but the party lived through it all and is today recuperating. The people are coming to know the truth about the war, who was responsible for it, and what its net results were in the way of slaughter and sacrifice to the common people and of a harvest of gold to the profiteers. The hysteria following the war has now largely subsided with the result that the Socialist party is being revived and reorganized, and within three years more will be larger and more powerful and militant, in my opinion, than ever before.

Let me suggest that there are two books in which you will find invaluable facts for use in your paper. The first is Frederick G. Howe's "Confessions of a Reformer,"[3] published by Scribner, a wonderful book presenting truths and facts in connection with the war and its results upon progressive movements of startling significance.

The other is "Shall it be Again" by John Kenneth Turner,[4] the book that tells more naked and terrible truths about the war, supported by documentary evidence, than any other I have yet seen.

By even mail I am sending you a copy of the Survey[5] in which you will find a series of articles upon the subject that may be of a little service to you.

The Socialist party did not nominate candidates of its own[6] for several reasons, the principal of which was that for the first time in the history of American politics the organized workers entered a national campaign as a class, as an organized force, and the Socialist party which from the beginning has been essentially a working class party felt that here was the opportunity to make common cause with the great body of organized workers, and even though the platform was not at all a socialist platform, it embodied so many socialist principles and so much of the socialist program that the Socialist party, enfeebled and decimated by the war, felt justified in casting its lot with the progressive organized workers who had declared their withdrawal from the old capitalist parties, and I feel satisfied that the future will vindicate the wisdom of this policy.

Answering your personal inquiry, my political and civil rights have not been restored. I have been disfranchised and I am not a citizen of the country in which I was born.[7]

I hope the foregoing will be of at least a small measure of service, and with regret that I am unable to give you more detailed information, and with all good wishes in the preparation and reading of your paper I am,

Yours faithfully,
Eugene V. Debs

TLS, IaH.

1. Marx Lewis served as secretary to Congressman Meyer London of New York from 1917 to 1919 and 1921 to 1923 and as secretary to Victor Berger from 1923 to 1929. An attorney, Lewis wrote a column on Washington political events (it appeared regularly in the *New Leader* and *American Appeal*) and was a delegate to the Socialist party's national conventions during the 1920s and 1930s. In 1934, he began his long association with the United Hatters, Cap, and Millinery Workers Union. As secretary, executive vice-president, and general secretary-treasurer, Lewis served that union until 1960.

2. Josephine Conger Kaneko was one of several former *Appeal to Reason* staff members who joined the *American Appeal.*

3. Frederic Clemson Howe (1867-1940) amassed a modest fortune as an attorney in Cleveland and New York City and earned a reputation as one of the nation's leading social reformers, particularly city reform, before World War I. A supporter of Woodrow Wilson in 1912, Howe was placed in charge of Ellis Island in New York, where he was credited with introducing more humane policies in the treatment of immigrants, but his outspoken criticism of the war and of the policies carried out during the Red Scare led to his resignation in 1919. One of the organizers of the Conference for Progressive Political Action in 1922, Howe worked for Robert La Follette in 1924 and later for Franklin D. Roosevelt. Howe's *The Confessions of a Reformer* was published in 1925.

4. John Kenneth Turner was another of the *Appeal to Reason* veterans who wrote for the *American Appeal.* His *Shall It Be Again?,* an account of the background and conduct of World War 1 and the peace settlement, was published in 1922.

5. Debs's response to the *Survey* symposium on "Where Are the Pre-War Radicals?" was one of a score of responses printed in the magazine's issue of February 1, 1926. Wrote Debs: "We Socialists are where we always were—just as radical, just as confident, just as determined."

6. In 1924.

7. At the time of his release from prison and after talking with President Harding and Attorney General Daugherty, Debs announced, "My citizenship is NON EST. I am not a citizen of the United States. I am a citizen of the world." *Washington Times,* December 27, 1921. He repeated the statement a number of times in his speeches and writings, arguing that because he had not received a pardon at the time of his release, he had been "robbed of his citizenship" and had lost his right to vote. The *American Appeal* launched a "Restore Debs' Citizenship" campaign in January 1926 and secured thousands of petition signatures in support of Victor Berger's congressional resolution seeking the restoration of Debs's citizenship, introduced on March 11, 1926. Despite the opinion of Morris Hillquit to the contrary, Debs continued to believe that he had lost his citizenship and political rights. The issue was not finally resolved until 1977, when Attorney General Griffin B. Bell, in a letter to Indiana Senator Birch Bayh, informed Bayh that "as far as I can determine, Mr. Debs was never deprived of his citizenship. The statute under which he was convicted did not authorize loss of citizenship, and there does not appear to be any sentencing order which would have deprived him of citizenship." Bell to Bayh, August 30, 1977, EVD Foundation, Debs Home.

EVD to David Karsner

February 4, 1926
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear David:

The suggestion you make in regard to McCray is certainly a cleverly conceived one and worthy of all consideration. I should really like to see him out for he has been punished as far as even his enemies could wish, and I should certainly speak the word in his favor if it would open his prison door and let him go back to his family. I suppose you have seen my article in the American Appeal in regard to his case.[1]

There are just two objections I have to publicly petition for his release in the way you suggest, the one being that I would seem to give preference to him, a once-plute who has already been much favored as a privileged prisoner and leaving the thousands of poor devils there to serve out their sentences, and the other that the act would have the appearance of seeking publicity rather than to render service to a human being in distress.

There are some fine things [in] the letter by Osborn. Of course he had no idea when he wrote his letter than he would be permitted to go to prison but he is entitled to full credit for the human sentiments expressed by him in reference to McCray who would never have dreamed of entertaining such a feeling toward a convicted robber.

I shall take the matter under careful consideration and meantime a thousand thanks for your loving thoughtfulness, so precious to me.

Always, always yours,
Eugene

TLS, NN Kars.

1. In "Paytriotic Ex-Governor, Jailed for Swindling, May Be Pardoned," *American Appeal*, January 23, 1926, Debs recalled former Indiana Governor Warren T. McCray's speech before the American Legion, his conviction and sentencing in 1924, and his imprisonment at Atlanta. "Press reports," Debs wrote, indicated that "executive clemency" would be granted to McCray because of "failing health." Debs approved McCray's release, which was granted in 1927, but questioned the motive behind it and the concern for McCray's health.

T. E. Moore[1] to EVD

February 18, 1926
Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

Dear Comrade Debs:

I am back in harness again and am trying to catch up with the work which piled up during my absence.

Our Comrades here were very much interested in my visit to you and they felt disappointed that you could set no definite date to visit us. I assured them, however, that the spirit was willing and should the opportunity present itself, that you would be glad to come and talk to us and meet the many, many Comrades who have longed so often to meet you.

It was very kind of you, Comrade Debs, to send me the booklet autographed, I am sure I did not deserve the kind things you said about me, but nevertheless, I will treasure them as one of the greatest treasures in my possession. I am delighted with the small pamphlets you so kindly sent. No doubt many of them are out of print, for I remember reading them as a youth in Seattle, many, many years ago.

You will be glad to know I am sure, Comrade, that the seeds of Industrial Unionism that were so carefully sown by you and your contemporaries are especially bearing fruit in Canada. I think it will be comforting to you to know that all throughout this Dominion there is a concerted movement on the part of the various craft unions to secede from their International affiliation and join up with the One Big Union. Here in Canada we feel that the year 1926 will be a dynamic one in Labor's history and ere it closes it will see the working class a long way on its journey toward emancipation from the wages system.

Under separate cover I am sending you a marked copy of our paper and I hope some day we may have the privilege of printing an article from your pen.

Again thanking you for your kindly interest in our organization and for your Comradely consideration in sending me the pamphlets, I close with kindest greetings to yourself and Mrs. Debs, and remain,

Yours for the workers,
T. E. Moore
EDITOR.

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Thomas E. Moore was editor of the *One Big Union Bulletin*, published in Winnipeg, Manitoba, and secretary of the Independent Labor party of Manitoba. Winnipeg city directory, 1926-35.

Morris Hillquit to EVD

March 1, 1926
New York City

Dear Gene:—

After receiving your letter of February 24th, I have looked into the law to ascertain your citizenship status and have made some interesting discoveries on that point.

One of them is that you are still a full fledged citizen of the United States with all rights of citizenship including the right to vote and to hold office. Contrary to the popularly established notion there is no provision in the constitution of the United States of [or] in any Federal statute depriving a person of citizenship on conviction of a felony. The rights of citizenship and suffrage, which are two different things, are regulated by the state laws, and the statutes of several states provide for the disfranchisement of persons convicted of felony. The statutes of Indiana, of which you were a citizen at the time of your convictions and which still determine your civil status, provide by Section 6877, as follows:

> "Every person undergoing a sentence of imprisonment on conviction of any felony or misdemeanor shall be disfranchised *during the period of such imprisonment.*"

In the case of Dorsey v. State (100 N.E. 369) in which the Courts of Indiana were called upon to construe this section, the opinion states:

> "We are of the opinion that this statute confers no power on the trial court to adjudge disfranchisement, even on the conviction of a person under a statute which fails to fix disfranchisement as a part of the punishment. The effect of the above statute is to prohibit from voting at election all persons who at the time are in prison as a result of conviction for a crime or misdemeanor, regardless of the punishment therefor adjudged by the court."

In New York and numerous other states the provisions of the law are similar to those of the State of Indiana.

Under the circumstances, I would consider it perfectly safe and

proper for you to apply for a passport if you need one and to state in your application that you are a native born citizen of the United States without reference to your late Atlanta residence. If you do not require a passport you may unhesitatingly make a similar declaration on re-entry.

This view of the law rather takes out the point from Victor's congressional resolution demanding your restoration to citizenship but I feel quite confident that it is the correct view.

No passport is required to visit Bermuda, Cuba or Mexico. If I were you, however, I would choose Bermuda.[1] The trip to Mexico is after all quite tiring and I am not certain that you and Mrs. Debs would benefit by it to the same extent as you would by a stay in Bermuda. Years ago I spent a somewhat enforced vacation in Bermuda in the early spring and enjoyed every day of it. The island is small and peaceful and there is nothing to compare with it in beauty. The trip takes only about two days from New York and steamers sail both ways almost every day.

I hope you will go soon and have a joyful time of it.

With kindest wishes,

Very sincerely yours,
Morris Hillquit

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. During the latter part of March and early April 1926, Debs and his wife took a vacation trip to Bermuda. Debs continued to worry that his citizenship status might jeopardize his readmission to the United States and he believed that he was deliberately harassed by the press and by Bermuda officials during his trip. "Law Hounds Trail Debs to Bermuda—His Return Is Greatly Endangered," *American Appeal*, April 10, 1926.

EVD to Morris Hillquit

March 4, 1926
[Terre Haute, Indiana]

My dear Morris:

Your communication of the 1st. inst. has been received and carefully read. The discovery that you have made in my case is something of a surprise to me. You inform me that I have not forfeited my citizenship in any respect, that I have not been disfranchised, that I have the right to vote and hold office, and that in fact my citizenship has not been impaired in the slightest by my conviction.

Now of course I cannot presume to question the correctness of your finding for aside from the attention you have given the case from purely kind personal consideration I know you to be a first class lawyer and entitled to full credit in all such matters. But it appears strange to me that I am nertheless without a vote and shorn of my civil rights in respect to the franchise and other matters, and that there has never been a question about it until now, so far as I know, since my release from prison.

Now let me show you what a formidable array of high "authorities" are pitted against you and declare exactly the opposite view to that taken by you.

President Harding stated in my personal interview with him in the White House on my release from prison that I was disfranchised and I now quote his precise words to me: "The restoration of your citizenship is a matter for after-consideration." This after-consideration, so-called, has yet to materialize. Now it seems to me that the President who commuted my sentence ought to know whether or not it affected by citizenship. If you are right he was wrong. President Coolidge has taken exactly the same position as I chance to know from correspondence that has come from the White House. Two Attorneys General, at the head of the Department of Justice at Washington have held me disfranchised and my citizenship forfeited to that extent and beyond, and whether they are right or wrong my status is fixed by their opinion, so far as the matter in question is concerned. Clarence Darrow is of the same opinion and so is Joe Sharts. And so are all the lawyers here in Terre Haute.

Whatever you may have found in the law as to my being a full-fledged citizen the fact is that I am not permitted to register here by the election board and not permitted to vote here by the election officials. My case in the light of your finding is analogous to that of the chap in the old story who was in jail when a friend called upon him and said "Why they can't put you in jail for that," to which the answer was "Whether they can or not I'm in jail just the same."

Now as against your opinion—and I do not say that you are not right—there stand two Presidents of the United States, two Attorneys Generals,[1] Finch,[2] the Pardon Attorney at Washington, Clarence Darrow, Joe Sharts,[3] the lawyers here, the election boards and officials here and various others not necessary to mention.

There is one point in your finding, however, that I know to be wrong. You say that I am entitled to hold office. In this you are mistaken. The legislature of the state of Indiana enacted a law now on the statute books at the time I was in Atlanta, perhaps for my particular benefit, which specifically provides that a person convicted

of a felony shall forever be ineligible to hold public office. Under this law I am absolutely barred from holding office and to that extent my citizenship certainly limps on three feet.

If you will write to the Attorney General or to the Pardon Attorney at Washington they will tell you that I am disfranchised and that my civil rights have been forfeited and that if I wish these restored I must personally apply for a pardon[4] to the president of the United States and that the matter of restoring my citizenship and civil rights will then be considered by the president. That is the answer that has been sent out repeatedly from the Department of Justice to inquiring and protesting correspondents,[5] and now perhaps you can tell me whether I am bound by this or not and whether these high officials have or have not the authority to decide the matter and to determine my legal status as a citizen or non citizen.

Please let me thank you sincerely for your very kind and prompt attention to my request and for the service thus rendered me of which I have full and grateful appreciation.

I note particularly your recommendation of Bermuda and am very glad to have this advice and recommendation which decides the matter in favor of Bermuda and my wife and I if nothing else happens to prevent will leave for there next week.

Hoping this finds you well as usual and not too busy I am always,

Yours faithfully,
[Eugene V. Debs]

TLc, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Presumably Harry Daugherty and John Garibaldi Sargent (1860-1939), attorneys general under Calvin Coolidge.

2. James A. Finch, pardon attorney in the Department of Justice in the Harding and Coolidge administrations.

3. As noted, Joseph Sharts was a socialist lawyer from Dayton, Ohio, who served as one of Debs's lawyers in his trial in Cleveland in 1918 and was the publisher of the *Miami Valley Socialist.*

4. In "Debs Scorns Pardon" (*New Leader,* March 20, 1926), Debs claimed that Attorney General Sargent was "opposed to amnesty for Eugene V. Debs . . . unless Debs applies for a pardon." Debs added, "Under no circumstances will I apply for a pardon. I made no defense when I was tried in 1918 for violation of the espionage act because I believe I had committed no crime. If I should now appeal to the president for pardon it would be a direct acknowledgment of guilt."

5. In a letter to Theodore Debs dated March 26, 1926, Frank Putnam enclosed copies of letters he had received from the pardon attorney, James A. Finch, and from Attorney General Sargent. In his letter of February 19, 1925, Finch said it was his opinion that "Debs lost no civil rights whatever under the federal law by reason of his conviction, although he very probably did lose indirectly, by operation of the law of the state where he resides, certain civil rights, chief of which is the right to vote." In Sargent's letter, dated March 26, 1925, the attorney general wrote that "Mr. Finch

has correctly stated the present status of Mr. Debs," adding that "if Mr. Debs should file an application for pardon to restore his civil rights, the same would be given appropriate attention." InTI, Debs Collection.

Morris Hillquit to EVD

March 9, 1926
New York City

Dear Gene:

I rather anticipated that my views on the subject of your citizenship would meet with a certain degree of surprise and even incredulity. The popular notion that a conviction of crime carries with it loss of citizenship is widespread and by no means confined to laymen.

For your present purposes, the question whether you have been deprived of the franchise, i.e., the right to vote and to hold public office, is not of immediate practical importance. I am absolutely certain that you are still a citizen of the United States to the extent that you can not be barred from re-entering the country after a trip abroad.

On the other and incidental phases of the question which I discussed in my previous letter to you, I still believe that I am right which, of course, does not preclude the possibility of my being wrong.

After the receipt of your second letter, I have made a personal examination of the statutes of your state. The compilation of Indiana laws, including an annotated constitution of your state which I secured in the Library of the Bar Association bears date 1926. The constitution contains a clause conferring on the General Assembly the power "to deprive of the right of suffrage and to render inelligible any person convicted of an infamous crime" but I fail to discover any law passed under that authority except the section of the Election Law quoted in my former letter which disfranchises prisoners during the period of their imprisonment. I shall be very thankful to you if at some convenient time you will procure for me a copy of the law passed by the Legislature of your state to which you refer in your letter and which is supposed to render you inelligible for public office.

I should also like to have copies of the statements of the two U.S. Attorney Generals who held that you had forfeited your citizenship, if such statements were made in writing and also the opinion or statement of the Pardon Attorney which you mention.

I do not know how much importance you attach to the right to vote and whether you would care to make a fight in the courts of your state to compel your election officers to permit you to vote. In

my present, possibly incomplete, state of enlightment, I believe you might be successful in such a proceeding.

However, I am determined to make a thorough and exhaustive study of all phases of the question as I have become deeply interested in it on my own account.

I am glad to learn that you have decided in favor of Bermuda and feel certain that both you and Mrs. Debs will enjoy the place.

I hope you will find a little time to see me while in New York en route to or from Bermuda.

With very best wishes,

Sincerely yours,
Morris Hillquit

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

EVD to J. A. C. Meng[1]

March 12, 1926
[Terre Haute, Indiana]

My dear Comrade Meng:

Your communication of the 9th. inst. with enclosure from Comrade Victor L. Berger, herewith returned, came last evening. I took it home with me that I might give it careful reading and consideration without interruption, and after having done so I am answering this morning with the regret that I am on the eve of leaving here to be gone several weeks, and in the little time that remains I am so busy that I shall not be able to answer you as fully as I should be glad to do under other circumstances.

First of all, allow me a little personal explanation. My wife has been suffering with the flu, more or less severe and menacing, all winter, and nothing will relieve her but the change to a warmer climate. I myself am tired and worn after many months of continuous and exhausting labor, especially since the new paper was started and my correspondence has so largely increased, as well as other demands upon my time and strength until I have about reached once more the limits of my physical endurance. Under these circumstances my wife and I are now leaving here for the South, to Bermuda, probably, and perhaps to Havana and Mexico. How long we will be gone will depend upon circumstances. I am told that if we go to Bermuda I will be denied entrance to this country on the ground of my having

been deprived of my citizenship and civil rights. But my plans will not be changed on that account.

Now please allow me to say in the first place that your letter, although I take issue, positive issue, with many statements in it, does not in the slightest degree affect my love for you or my perfect faith in your personal honor and your moral rectitude. All the years that I have known you have but served to confirm my faith not only in your honesty, in your sincere idealism, but in your extremely kind, delicate, considerate regard for the rights and feelings of your comrades. I know how modest you have been, all too modest, in the fear that you might intrude upon me, and I am not only not insensible to your personal loyalty and devotion, especially in the hours of supreme test, but I am filled with appreciation of the spirit of it and grateful for it beyond expression. This much for my personal feeling and attitude towards you, no matter though we differ as widely as the poles on every phase of the question in controversy.

"Love is not love that alters when it alteration finds."

Shakespeare wrote that immortal line and I am profoundly impressed with the truth of it. I have no fear, whatever our differences, that your love for me will alter for it is of the kind and of the warp and woof of the character of a man not susceptible to alteration unless it be to grow more steadfast and abiding.

Now let me say to you in all frankness that it is hard, very hard indeed for me to understand how you could conclude for a single instant that I had you and honest men of your kind in mind when I wrote my article in denunciation of the rotten and utterly damnable administration of the enforcement laws of prohibition.

I had in mind a certain type of prohibitionists which you cannot fail, it seems to me, to recognize, and to hold in the same contempt and detestation that I do. Now let me call your attention to the fact that the paragraph upon which you have centered your bitterest criticism reads as follows:

> "Thousands of *SO-CALLED* PROHIBITIONISTS ARE SIMPLY BOOTLEGGERS IN DISGUISE AND ENOUGH OF THEM HAVE BEEN CAUGHT RED-HANDED AND PUBLICLY EXPOSED TO PLACE ALL THE REST UNDER RANK SUSPICION."

Now I mean just that, every word of it, and I was never more positively convinced that I dealt with the real truth than when I penned that paragraph. The charge has been made over and over again that "*so-called*" prohibitionists without number are bootleggers and profiting in the crime. I met one on the street in New York the last time

I was there. He had been in penitentiary with me at Atlanta. He was a prohibitionist and a bootlegger. I admonished and warned him but without avail. He assured me that he was playing safe and his personal appearance certainly confirmed him. He was dressed in style and told me he was in close relation with prohibition enforcement officials, and then frankly said: "We are all prohibitionists and all bootleggers and believe me, it's a paying game."

Now how in the world you could infer that I meant you and your friend Goode[2] and your father of sainted memory in writing this paragraph is simply beyond my understanding. You certainly could not imagine me, dear comrade, could you, referring to you and your revered father as "*so-called*" prohibitionists? Then how could you feel for an instant that I had you in mind when you must have known, unless you totally misread the paragraph, that I had only the miserable hypocrites, frauds, impostors, false-pretenders in mind who thrive in their rottenness in the prohibition that has not prohibited, cannot prohibit, and never will prohibit.

And here let me say to you with equal frankness that I am the uncompromising enemy of prohibition and always have been. Not only to liquor prohibition but to the whole body of abominable doctrine based upon the vicious BLUE LAW FALLACY that men can be made moral and decent by prohibition and repression and by the enforcement of brutal punitive regulations, the surest way of making criminals I know and I think I am in position to prove it.

From the beginning of creation or at least from the beginning of social contact among human beings the narrow, bigoted, hateful, intolerant spirit of prohibition and repression has been the curse of the race. Read for example the shocking expose by Rupert Hughes[3] with unquestioned documentary evidence taken from contemporary sources about the unspeakable, unmentionable immoralities of the so-called Puritans, the hypocritical pietists who treated a smile as a crime, who thrust their insolent noses into all privacies, and who drastically prohibited and suppressed everything except the right to be a hypocrite like themselves. They had prohibition with a vengeance but drunkenness ran riot along side of some other vices and crimes compared with which drunkenness was a virtue.

You enclose a letter to me from Comrade Berger and I thank you for the privilege of reading it. You surely do not imagine that Comrade Berger agrees with you in the position you have taken toward my article. If you are under that delusion please drop him a line and you will find that he entertains the same views I do on prohibition and while he is strong for temperance he is opposed to prohibition under

the present vicious enforcement laws, than which there can scarcely be anything more intemperate.

Prohibition in its present form was foisted upon the country during the war and its leaders know it and would not dare to submit the issue to the people. You believe in the right of the people to rule themselves and so do I. Why do the prohibitionists oppose submission of the issue to the people, the only ones who have the right to decide it? Is it because they do not trust the people or because they do not trust themselves?

The Fort Wayne Journal-Gazette, the leading paper of that city in Indiana has just concluded a poll of the question of its readers. The result was 875 for prohibition and 20,950 against prohibition. I enclose the press dispatch making the report. This may not represent the general sentiment but it is at least highly significant.

You say that only the poor are deprived of whisky under prohibition and you are willing that the rich shall have it and perish and rot in their indulgence of it. You are sadly mistaken. White mule is accessible here in Terre Haute and elsewhere to anyone who wants it and the filthy poison is just as cheap as was whiskey in the open saloon. Every morning our papers contain a string of names of poor devils arrested for drunkenness. There is not a rich man in the bunch. They are all poor creatures and the jails everywhere are stuffed with them to overflowing, all beneficiaries of the great blessing of prohibition enforcement. From Washington comes a press dispatch which I hold in my hand, under date of March 5th. I quote the opening paragraph as follows: "Criminal convictions under federal statutes have increased 350% in the last fifty years causing an overcrowding of federal penitentiaries far beyond their normal capacity." And for this condition prohibition is largely responsible.

It is true that the open saloon has gone but there are today more closed saloons, more underground saloons, more saloons in general and particular than ever before in the history of the country. If you will write to Victor Berger he will tell you as he told me that while prohibition closed a score of breweries {in Milwaukee} it opened a hundred thousands by making every home a brewery where they manufacture their own concoctions and where no prohibition enforcement will ever reach or stop them. The difference is that they used to go into the front door of a saloon and get a drink and now they get their drinks like a sneak and a hypocrite and hold themselves in contempt instead of self-respect.

From Philadelphia there comes a dispatch that "A new cheap process of making alcohol which government officers asserted would, unless checked, make prohibition enforcement all but impossible."

Vinegar {is used} in this process and who shall prohibit vinegar making.

Whiskey, wine and beer will be made as long as corn and wheat and grapes grow, and instead of foolishly and vainly trying to stamp it out with the iron heel of prohibition and suppression it is infinitely saner to educate and enlighten the people and to give attention to surrounding them with conditions that make for temperance, morality and sane and sweet human living.

We have thousands, multiplied thousands of laws national, state, and municipal, and grinding out more thousands of laws prohibiting everything under the sun, and what good do they do? If they could all be repealed by some magic of power the people would be far better off.

For myself I would rather appear at the bar of judgment drunk a free soul and plead guilty and take the consequences than to appear there in a straitjacket and confess that I was sober because prohibition had given me no chance to do otherwise. I have not one particle of use of that kind of morality, the kind made by prohibition and suppression. That kind of virtue(?) does not appeal to me in the least. True manliness and self-respect are not the product of prohibition and suppression but of freedom and independence. If a man is only sober because he can't get whisky or if he is only honest because he is handcuffed and has no chance to steal he is not my kind of a man.

Here let me make the incidental mention of a fact in connection with the writing of my article. It was written just after two government officials, prohibition agents, came to this city, engaged the service of a prostitute and had her inveigle a man into a hotel room where she surrendered her body to him, when these prohibitionists stepped into the room, arrested the man, charged him with violating the narcotic law, and that man, the victim of the conspiracy of these two prohibition scoundrels, is now serving a year in the penitentiary at Leavenworth, utterly ruined and his future blasted. And this is but one of hundreds of instances of the kind that are taking place all over the country in the name of prohibition, and if there was ever anything lower, viler, more utterly despicable and infamous than this connected with the open saloon I confess never to have heard of it.

There is a great deal more that might be said but time presses and I have already been at too great length in trying to make my position clear.

I have only to say in closing as I said in the beginning that for you as a man, as a comrade, as a clean, white, noble soul I have the same

attachment, the same appreciation and devotion that I have always had since first you and I came into each other's lives.[4]

Yours fraternally,
[Eugene V. Debs]

TLc, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. In a letter to Debs dated March 9, 1926, James A. C. Meng (1859-1935) identified himself as an active Arkansas socialist before World War I who had moved to Youngstown, Ohio, in 1920 and become deeply engaged in the support of Prohibition. InTI, Debs Collection. His many letters to the *Youngstown Vindicator* between 1920 and 1935 reflect his continuing support of socialism and his belief that socialism and prohibition could combine to create a better society. See, e.g., *Youngstown Vindicator*, September 24, 1926; October 14, 1930. Meng's March 9, 1926, letter to Debs criticized Debs's article on prohibition, "We Want to Know" (*American Appeal*, March 6, 1926), in which Debs said that the "liquor traffic" was "more iniquitous and debauching under prohibition that it was in the days of the open saloon" and advocated "nationalizing the liquor traffic business."

2. In his March 9 letter to Debs, Meng described a "Brother Goode," a fellow prohibitionist "who is paying my daughter's way through college out of simple goodness of heart."

3. Rupert Hughes (1872-1956) was a magazine editor and popular author of novels, plays, short stories, and screenplays. His article "Why I Quit Going to Church," which appeared in *Cosmopolitan* in 1925, was viewed in some quarters as an attack on organized religion.

4. In his March 9 letter to Debs, Meng recalled that "you visited my humble home in Eureka Springs, Ark., in 1904." Eight of Meng's letters to Debs, written during and following Debs's imprisonment at Atlanta, are in InTI, Debs Collection.

Lucy E. Parsons to EVD

March 12, 1926
Chicago, Illinois

Grand Old Rebel!

I am writing you these few lines to express my admiration and appreciation of the grand stand that you have taken, regarding your restoration to citizenship. Why should {you ask} for that which you, in justice and fairness have never forfeited? It is to such characters as you that reaction is halted and this stupid old world moves on a little, until the time for change is reached.

I am sending you a copy of the Life of my late husband, Albert R. Parsons,[1] also a copy of the, "Famous Speeches." You will observe in reading his "Life," that he, too {refused} to ask for a "pardon," stating that he would not ask for pardon for that which he had not

forfeited—His life. If you mention these books, in the "Appeal," Life of Parsons, $3.25 Speeches $1.25

Hoping that your useful life may be spared {for} many years I am Sincerely yours,

Lucy E. Parsons

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. As noted, Albert Richard Parsons (1848-87) was one of the four men executed in Illinois following the Haymarket Massacre in Chicago in 1886. In the legal actions following the notorious trial, Parsons, who had been tried largely on the basis of his reputation as an anarchist editor and speaker, refused to ask Illinois Governor Richard J. Oglesby for executive clemency on the ground that such a request would imperil the lives of the six other men convicted with him.

Emma Goldman to EVD

March 18, 1926
London, England

Dear good Comrade,

Comrade Van Valkenburgh was good enough to send me your letter to him of Jan. 15. It reached me in France where I had gone to escape the dreadful London climate. Since then I have been very busy preparing a course of lectures on Ibsen and which I am now delivering in this city. That explains the delay in answering your very kind letter.

I cannot tell you how much your high opinion of me and your splendid comradeship for both Alexander Berkman and myself mean to me. So very few people realize the true meaning of comradeship. With most of them it implies a denial of intellectual independence. I suppose that is the reason why so many of my so-called friends and co-workers have repudiated me because of my independent stand on Russia. But you, dear Comrade, show by your broadmindedness and your generous spirit that you realise one may differ from you and yet be honest and beyond reproach. I thank you for it.

There is one thing in your letter which I would like to correct. It is where you refer to the harsh treatment which Berkman and myself were made to suffer in Russia. I do not know how you came to think that the Soviet government subjected us to the same persecution as other political offenders. In justice to the ruling power in Russia I wish to say that never once by word or deed were we molested or interfered with. Quite the contrary. Everything was done to gain our

confidence and cooperation. It is this which made it so difficult for us to take a definite stand against the persecution of brave men and women which was carried on during our stay and if anything has increased since we left. No, we have no personal grievances against the Bolshevik regime. Our criticism is impelled by our fervent belief in political freedom and by our knowledge of the integrity and idealism of the political victims of the present regime.

It seems strange that so many imagine that one may not see evils except from a subjective personal standpoint. That unless one has one-self suffered under these evils one may not know their effect or undertake to point them out. I feel that it is because Berkman and I have no personal reasons to oppose the dictatorship and the terror that we can speak with GREATER authority. However, I feel in justice to the Bolsheviki that it is necessary to dissuade you from your impression that we were in any way made to suffer. I often wish we had been able to share the martyrdom of the unfortunates now slowly being done to death in Bolshevik prisons.

Yes, dear Comrade, we have all "heartily favoured Soviet Russia from the hour it was born and have supported it with pen and from the platform to the full extent." But when we came face to face with the conditions in Russia we had to admit to ourselves that what we considered "Soviet Russia" was a delusion and a snare. That in its stead there is a {crushing} machine which has a stranglehold on the Russian masses and which is undermining the true revolutionary elements as represented by the socialist and anarchist ranks in the country. Hence we had to speak out.

Naturally we were and are feeling interested in protecting the revolution against counter-revolutionary attempts, but that is quite another issue than when you say that it is "necessary to protect the government and its institutions against counter-revolution." Even if I admitted that the govt of Russia represented the majority of the Russian people I should still insist that as a govt it is contrary to the interests of the revolution. But in Russia the govt is composed of an infinitesimal minority, a small political group, which by means of terror and the complete monopoly of every avenue of life is maintaining its power over the masses. What particular reason is there to protect such a govt? And is it not itself the most counter-revolutionary force? However, the people who are in Russian prisons, concentration-camps and exile are not those who have ever attempted by means of arms to overthrow the present govt. Even ~~if they had~~ though they dared to disagree with it and to oppose it.

Yes, one would have assumed that the Labour, and Radical elements in England would lend a willing ear to an expose of the actual con-

ditions in Russia. Unfortunately the labour elements here believe as little in free speech for those they do not agree with as the Tories do. Therefore I have not succeeded in reaching the rank and file of labour either from the socialist and labour platforms or their press. And as I never have and never will mix with the Tories I have had a desperate struggle to plead in behalf of the thousands suffering in Russia. After no end of difficulties and correspondence "the New leader"[1] published PART of a letter which I sent to the Daily Herald and which the latter had no courage to publish. That is some gain after eighteen months of effort. Besides that I have been able to speak from my own platform even though the attendance has been painfully small. I know at least that the people who did come are willing to learn and that is more than can be said for the leaders of the labour movement in England.

In this city I am stopping with very dear friends whom it is my fortune to have met during my visits to Bristol. Dr. Beckh[2] is an American who has been abroad since his childhood, studying in Marburg and Oxford. For fifteen years he has been at the head of a free church in this city, but as he is a rebellious spirit and capable of growth the ministry proved too limited for his rapid advance. He has therefore resigned and is going to America. I am very glad of that because I feel that since I myself can no longer disturb the sluggish peace of the "hundred percentors" that a man of the knowledge and ability of doctor Beckh is going back to his native land to {do} my job and more. That does not mean that Dr. Beckh is an anarchist. But his sympathies are all with the masses and his intentions are to reach all people who can be aroused to the pressing questions of our time. I have told him about you, dear good comrade and what a force you are in the United States. I am hoping that you two will meet and that if you can help him at any time to get a good hearing you will do it.

I hope you are keeping well. I am sure you are keeping your youthful spirit.

Fraternally,
Emma Goldman

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. A publication of the Independent Labour party in England.

2. Little is known of Dr. Gustav F. Beck beyond Goldman's description of him. In reporting his sermons at the West Side Unitarian Church and his lectures at the Community Church in New York City, the *New York Times* (September 16, 1929; March 21, 1932) identified Beck as director of the Labor Temple School, a position held by Will Durant until 1927, when he resigned to devote his full time to writing. In an address to an adult-education conference in 1935, Beck noted that he had been "teaching New York's East Side working class for eight years" and he thought that

"the poor worker in America often has a truer sense of cultural values than the 'sodden middle class' which is fairly comfortable and therefore has stopped thinking." *New York Times,* May 21, 1935.

EVD to Theodore Debs

March 31, 1926
Bermuda

My dear Kude,

Your letter of the 25th is just recd. I am deeply sorry to hear of the death of Mrs. Carr.[1] She was a fine woman {and} gave all her life to the cause and I shall at once write to Comrade Carr & tender sympathy. I have already written Borland.[2] But I can't write the suggested funeral tributes for the Appeal. I have no type-writer or facilities here—and no time—for I have all I can do to take care of what there is already in hand. First of all I am threatened with deportation & may be ordered to leave here any day. The Immigration Inspector has twice interrogated me, once on landing and later here at hotel where he, accompanied by the Chief of Police & the Sergeant of Police conducted a long & detailed investigation, asking me a hundred questions & quoting the law here against admission of persons convicted of crime. I don't know what the outcome will be but I am holding myself in readiness to leave at any time. There is no doubt I was trailed here from U.S.A. & probably there was a secret service man on the boat. At least the Immigration Inspector knew what boat I was on & confronted me the instant I stepped from the boat. I have written the particulars to "Kirk" for the Appeal.[3] I shall not be surprised in the least if I'm not allowed to return to U.S.A.—I *know* strong influences will be brought to bear to keep me out & *it can be done under their interpretation of the law.*

I can do nothing with your suggestion about the Scripps papers taking up my case on the basis of Hillquit's opinion of the law. You should have made that to Murray King or Barnes.[4] What can I do with that down here? I have no type-writer & you have all the Hillquit correspondence which the Nat'l office would have to see to understand how to present {the matter} to the United News & the Scripps papers. At any rate I can do nothing with it. Don't send me any letters or papers except the Appeal unless they are of special importance for I can't attend to them—and I *may not* be here to get them.

That was a wonderful poem in the World-Tomorrow by the woman who heard my Cincinnati speech.[5] It was there {the Mayor} swore I

should not speak & {the C of C et al} swore they'd fix me as they had Herbert Bigelow. If you have not done so I wish you would drop a few lines of thanks & appreciation to the *author* in care of Anna Rochester[6] (I believe that's her name) Editor of the "World Tomorrow." You have her letter in the files. Drop her {the Editor} a line also & thank her for having published the poem & tell her how fine it is, & for having sent you copies of same. I suppose she sent you several copies—If not, ask her to kindly do so—then send one to Murry King & tell him it was on this occasion that I was threatened with lynching at Cinti—that the Mayor declared through the press he'd lock me up if I tried to speak—that I was excluded from *all hotels*—that the contract our committee had for Music Hall was forcibly cancelled by Chamber of Commerce, Am. Legion & Ku Klux Klan {just before the meeting}; & that I was escorted to the meeting at C.L.U. Hall[7] by a bodyguard of six striking Steel Workers from Covington Ky., across the river. Pretty near the whole police force of Cinti was out, *but so were tens of* thousands of people who packed the streets & raised a shout that shook the building when I arrived—and the police deemed it healthy to let me speak & let me alone—and *I did speak* that night if ever I did in my life—& that was the background of the speech that now, after nearly three years, has its echo in this wonderful poem in the World Tomorrow. This will make an introduction to the poem & it will be an interesting story in the struggle & it ought to go in the Appeal.

You can write a little appreciation of Mrs. Carr for the Appeal.

I have to revise the Constitution of the Soc. party while here & have it ready to submit to convention {May 1st}.[8] I brot the copy with me. I have also to revise & finish my prison book[9]—I brot that copy with me also. That will keep me busy enough. I doubt whether I'll have time enough here for these jobs. There will be *rest* for me when I am put away for good—& not before. With love & kisses to you & Gertrude in which Kate joins

Ever the same
Gene

Papers recd. OK.

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Ella Carr, wife of Edward Ellis Carr, editor of the *Christian Socialist*, was for many years secretary of the Christian Socialist Fellowship in Chicago. *American Appeal*, March 19, 1926.

2. Wilfred P. Borland, who had worked with Debs on the *BLF Magazine* and later edited *Railway Conductor* and *Labor Advocate*. Borland's son had died recently. Theodore Debs to Borland, March 16, 1926. InTI, Debs Collection.

3. Debs's "Letter from Bermuda," recounting much of what is in this letter to Theodore Debs, was published in the *American Appeal* on April 10, 1926.

4. Murray King was managing editor, J. Mahlon Barnes acting business manager, of the *American Appeal*, which published in nearly every issue a front-page story concerning Debs's citizenship status.

5. A poem by Marion Cummings, "Eugene V. Debs in Cincinnati June 21, 1923," was published in *World Tomorrow*, March 1926. The poem describes the opposition in Cincinnati to Debs's speech there and the crowd that attended the speech, in which "the Great Lover spoke to the Beloved." Other accounts of the event are in Mary D. Brite, "Anyhow Debs Spoke in Cincinnati," the *Nation*, July 25, 1923, and Robert A. Hoffman, "Cincinnati and Vicinity," *Socialist World*, July 1923.

6. Anna Rochester (1880-1966) was an economist and historian who was active in the Christian Socialist movement and the Fellowship of Reconciliation. She edited *World Tomorrow*, published by the fellowship, from 1922 to 1926 and joined the Communist party in 1927.

7. Central Labor Union Hall, the "Labor Temple."

8. The party's national convention was scheduled to open in Pittsburgh on May 1, 1926. "Debs Drafts Platform," *American Appeal*, March 20, 1926.

9. As noted, Debs's *Walls and Bars*, a collection of his prison articles and an introductory chapter, was published in 1927.

EVD to Theodore Debs

April 5, 1926
Bermuda

My dear old Pard,

I guess they're going to let us finish our visit here without further molestation. At least there has been no inclination to the contrary since the last visit of the Immigration Authorities. We were both very seasick all the way & we have not been at all well since but we look for better days from now on although the weather is anything but favorable, it being quite warm & damp & gusty. We expect to leave here for home on or before the 20th, and we are looking forward to it with more pleasure than we did to leaving. I'd rather be in the woods about home looking for mushrooms & seeing an occasional Bob White and {now} and then resting under an old Hickory tree than anywhere else on earth.

I anticipate no trouble getting back into U.S. but shall be prepared for any emergency.

The papers you have sent came OK. Saturday, including the Appeal and St. Louis Labor for which Thanks! I note the death of Jim Oneal's mother[1] in T.H. paper marked by you & I shall drop Jim a line of condolence. He recently celebrated his 51st birthday & was honored nobly by the N.Y. comrades.

Pls. send Mrs. Louise Custer 2605 Chippewa St Louis Mo.
1 Hollings—1 Dist Cin 1 Leaflet Woman—1 Childhood—1 Cooke—
We were glad to see Fred & Jessie[2] here Saturday but they could only stay an hour. Hope Getrude is entirely well by this time. Kate & I send heaps of love to you both—

Your old pard
Gene

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Oneal's mother died at the age of seventy-five in Terre Haute on March 25, 1926. *American Appeal,* April 3, 1926. Debs's letter of condolence to Oneal, April 5, 1926, is in InTI, Debs Collection.
2. Debs's nephew, Fred Heinl, and his wife.

Sinclair Lewis to EVD

April 8, 1926
Kansas City, Missouri

Dear Gene:

After drifting all over the United States for the eleven months since I returned from Germany, I have now settled permanently in Kansas City—that is to say, for two months or so. I have heard in a vague way that you are editing a magazine in Chicago.[1] Are you living there or are you remaining in Terre Haute? Whatever I do, I must have the privilege and pleasure of seeing you again before I return to Europe, which will probably be next October.

Is there any conceivable chance that you will be coming to Kansas City before June? If there isn't, I shall see to it that I come to wherever you are and pay my respects to you, even though you may be, like that son-of-a-sea cook, Mussolini, surrounded by nine thousand guards.

Gene, I still haven't been able to do *our* novel, "Neighbor." But you know that some day I shall do it. And I am now starting on the nearest novel to Neighbor—the real approach to Neighbor—the other novel of which I told you at such great length—the novel about the preachers.[2] As you know, it will be a sweet and sanctified novel filled with praise for all of the capitalistic preachers. I am here in Kansas City largely because here I have to work with me a Unitarian preacher[3] who admires you less than I do only because he has not had the privilege of meeting you as often as I have.

Do please let me know your plans for the next three or four months,

and let me particularly know when it may be convenient for me to come and spend a day or two with you.

God bless you, comrade!
Sinclair Lewis

My *special* love to Theodore.

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. As noted, Debs was editor of the *American Appeal*.
2. Lewis's *Elmer Gantry* was published in 1927.
3. Leon Milton Birkhead (1885-1954) was pastor of All Souls Unitarian Church in Kansas City and served as an adviser to Lewis in the writing of *Elmer Gantry*. Birkhead wrote *Is Elmer Gantry True?* for the Little Blue Book series.

L. M. Birkhead to EVD

April 8, 1926
Kansas City, Missouri

My dear Mr. Debs:

Since "Red" Lewis has brought my name to your attention, I want to lay my simple tribute at your feet.

Nearly twenty years ago I heard you speak from the back of the train at Lebanon, Illinois. That year I was converted to Socialism and joined the Socialist Local. I was then a student in McKendree College in Lebanon. Since then I have traveled a long way and I am afraid that I have back-slid.

I am having the most interesting experience of my life acting as confidential adviser to our mutual friend, "Red" Lewis. He has more energy and ideas to the square inch than any other human being I ever met. By the time he finishes with the preachers of Kansas City their morals and economics will be corrupted beyond repair. Anyway, I feel that he is trying to do in his way the same thing that you have tried so nobly and heroically to do,—to free the human race from a lot of its damned foolish ideas.

I hope that you will forgive me when I tell you that I have actually had the audacity to say in my pulpit that so far as I know there is only one honest-to-goodness follower of the lowly Nazarene in Amer-

ica, and that is yourself. I suppose, however, you have had other people pay you the same tribute many times.

With all good wishes,

Yours for the revolution,
Comrade L. M. Birkhead.

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

Ethel Barrymore[1] to EVD

April 8, 1926
Kansas City, Missouri

Dear Mr. Debs:

I am here with these two damned crazy nuts[2] and I love them both—but naturally it is you whom I or any other person has ever tried to give a certain sincerity to art, have always loved much more than these idiots who are trying to express in novels and even in preaching the things that you have always so magnificently expressed in life.

Sincerely yours,
Ethel Barrymore

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Ethel Barrymore (1879-1959) was one of the nation's most celebrated actresses of the first half of the twentieth century. The opening of the Ethel Barrymore Theatre in New York City in 1928 was a part of the recognition and acclaim she received as a stage actress and she was highly praised for her film acting as well.
2. Sinclair Lewis and the Rev. Leon Birkhead.

Sinclair Lewis to EVD

April 8, 1926
Kansas City, Missouri

Dear Gene:

The third letter[1] *really is* from Ethel Barrymore. God knows it seems improbable that she should be in Kansas City but she happens to be here making a reasonably honest living by playing in Vaudeville. She writes a rotten hand and if I hadn't told you that the third letter

was from her you would probably conclude that it was from Ether Bauckstein.

SL

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. The other two letters dated April 8, 1926, were from Lewis and Leon Milton Birkhead.

Pauline Rauschenbusch[1] to EVD

May 3, 1926
Rochester, New York

Dear Mr. Debs,

Whenever I think of you & see your name—I think of what Dr. Levi Powers[2] (of Gloucester Mass) said of Walter Rauschenbusch[3] "He was one of four or five men I have known in my lifetime who seemed to me to belong to a higher order of the race we hope will some day fill the earth."

July 25 it will be eight years since WR went on—He was a great admirer of yours and a kindred spirit. He was so modest a man—that I think but for that he might have sent you a copy of "Christianity and the Social Crisis—when it came out in 1907. He was often called a Christian Socialist. One time Rose Pastor Stokes was in the city and came to visit us—and she said she had come to induce him to join the Socialist Party. He explained to her that things being as they were—he would lose all his influence or most of it if he would. She said {at the end of the day} she understood and now begged him not to join it. That did not prevent his voting the Soc. ticket of course.

One of the books that have had a real influence—our "Prayers of the Social Awakening"[4] (the original edition had the subtitle "For God & the People" Mazzini's motto)

The Pilgrim Press has brot out a new edition lately (for Easter) and I would like to give myself the pleasure of sending you & Mrs. Debs a copy.

I wish you & WR had known each other. You would have been a great comfort to each other. He was a victim of the war as surely as tho he had been shot. He consistently spoke and worked against war. That the churches—who were supposed to be followers of the "Prince of Peace"—cried for war and crucified all {who} did not also cry—broke his heart. To show you how he felt about going when he did—not yet 57—I'll enclose some lines from his "Instructions if case of

my death." Since 1888 he had the handicap of deafness—or rather "hard of hearing." He had grippe in that 1888 when the Great Blizzard struck N.Y. & the Dr not understanding it then let him go out to look after the needy in his church (the only one he ever had)—he had a relapse—and deafness was his lot for the rest of his life—with continual headnoises to the end of his life. He was a brave spirit & never grew bitter—only sad. For him I can always be glad he could go on—for us it is the "irreparable loss."

Our five children are out in the world now—all choosing the difficult underpaid jobs of Social service of various kinds. *Winnifred*[5]—who had helped to make a survey of the Oriental people on the coast—has been editing the May Survey Graphic[6] which deals with that subject. Hilmar Stephen[7]—is with the League for Industrial Democracy—& has been a miner & is secy of the Com. on Coal & Giant Power & has been a miner & has a union card. [in margin] Wrote "The Anthracite Question" Book also: The People's Fight for Coal & Power. [end marginal note] Paul[8]—who married Justice Louis Brandeis's daughter[9]—teaches economics at the Univ. of Wisconsin. Carl[10] also taught economics at Cornell is now in N.Y.—with Labor Bureau (he worked in the Steel Mills.—(12 hrs.) Elisabeth[11] is in N.Y. too—trying to find her niche. I stay on in the old home & by sharing it with a no. of interesting girls in that way manage to keep up the home & can thus offer shelter & sanctuary to my own children & others. Pardon this long digression—I do want you to get acquainted with WR.

I think you will find that the "Prayers" express your own longings for this world of ours.

The Memorial No of the Rochester Seminary Bulletin gives one a sort of Birds Eye view of WR—they are getting rare—having been sent to his pupils—to all corners of the world—but I'd like to lend you my copy which you can return at your convenience.

Your life I know has been the Inspiration of great numbers of people—as it has to us.

With gratitude to God that such as you live among us—and with all good wishes and prayers for your well being.

Gratefully yours
Pauline Rauschenbusch[12]
Mrs. Walter

I send special greetings to Mrs. Debs—I can appreciate what she has been to you.

P.S. To show you how he felt about going when he did—I enclose some lines from his

"Instructions in case of my death"

For him I can always be glad—for us it is the irreparable loss—and "to the world" (I think Jane Addams said that.)

I am glad he could go and that not be here for this aftermath of the war—he suffered too intensely—and I'm sure wherever he is he is serving in some way.

I leave my love to those of my friends whose souls have never grown dark against me. I forgive the others and hate no man. For my many errors and weaknesses I hope to be forgiven by my fellows. I have long prayed God not to let me be stranded in a lonesome and useless old age, and if this is the meaning of my present illness, I shall take it as a loving mercy of God toward his servant. Since 1914 the world is full of hate, and I cannot expect to be happy again in my lifetime. I had hoped to write several books which have been in my mind, but doubtless others can do the work better. The only pang is to part from my loved ones and no longer to be able to stand by them and smooth their way. For the rest I go gladly, for I have carried a heavy handicap for thirty years, and have worked hard.

Mar 31/18 WR

From "Instructions in case of my death"

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Pauline Rother Rauschenbusch (1864-1949) was born in Germany, came to the United States, and lived in Milwaukee until her marriage in 1893 to Walter Rauschenbusch.

2. Levi Moore Powers (1864-1920) was an ordained Universalist minister who served as pastor of the Gloucester, Massachusetts, church from 1913 to 1919.

3. Walter Rauschenbusch (1861-1918) served as pastor of a Baptist church in New York City's Hell's Kitchen from 1886 to 1897 and as a professor of theology at the Rochester Theological Seminary from 1897 until his death. His training and experiences in New York strengthened his belief in the need for a Christian solution to America's social problems, and he became the nationally recognized leader of the Social Gospel movement in the United States. In addition to his teaching and his many speeches, he wrote a number of books whose titles suggest his interests and concerns, including *Christianity and the Social Crisis* (1907), *Christianizing the Social Order* (1912), and *A Theology for the Social Gospel* (1917).

4. Rauschenbusch's *Prayers of the Social Awakening*, a book of devotional literature, was published in 1910.

5. Winifred Raushenbush Rorty (1894-1979), like the other Rauschenbusch children, except Elizabeth, dropped the *c* in the spelling of her name in 1917. She became a noted sociologist, specializing in race relations, and published a biography of Robert E. Park.

6. Two articles of Winifred Raushenbush, "The Great Wall of Chinatown" and "Their Place in the Sun," the latter dealing with Japanese-Americans in California, appeared in *Survey Graphic*, May 1, 1926.

7. Stephen Raushenbush (1896-) was the author of many articles and books on public power and natural resources issues, the author of important social legislation

at both the state (Pennsylvania) and national levels, and chief investigator (1934-35) of the special United States Committee to Investigate the Munitions Industry. He continued his public service in the Department of the Interior, the Navy Department during World War II, and at the United Nations until his retirement in 1963.

8. Paul Arthur Raushenbush (1898-1980) played a leading role in creating the nation's first unemployment insurance program in Wisconsin and served as a consultant in creating such programs in other states. His books included *Unemployment Compensation* (1943) and *The Wisconsin Unemployment Reserve Law* (1933).

9. Paul Raushenbush and Elizabeth Brandeis were married in July 1925. *New York Times*, July 3, 1925.

10. Carl Raushenbush (1900-) was an economist specializing in labor problems, professor of economics at New York University from 1929 to 1942, and editor of New York State Department of Labor Reports from 1949 to 1970. Among other books, Carl Raushenbush wrote *Fordism: Ford and the Workers* (1937), *Labor and the New Deal* (1934), and *Labor Causes and Materials* (1941).

11. Elizabeth (Lisa) Rauschenbusch (1904-) was an actress who directed plays and taught drama and theatre at Sweetbriar College and the University of Rochester from 1935 to 1974.

12. Much of the information on the Rauschenbusch family is in Carl Raushenbush to editor, November 26, 1985.

EVD to Sinclair Lewis

May 13, 1926
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Sinclair Lewis:

We have been having all kinds of experiences here, save pleasant ones, during the last two or three weeks, or you would have heard from me days ago as promised in the hurried line I sent you in acknowledgment of your extremely kind letter of the 8th. ult. and the precious enclosures, including the newspaper account of your "sermon"[1] which my long experience with reports of that kind enables me to read with understanding, however crudely the reporter caught or the paper printed what you actually said.

Allow me first of all to compliment you as a "preacher." Never before in Kansas City has a pulpit resounded with so much blunt, refreshing frankness and honesty.

And now to answer your questions: I am one of the editors of the American Appeal published at Chicago, copies of which have been sent you. This paper began with the present year and has already achieved a considerable circulation. My editorial work is done here or wherever I may chance to be, and my residence continues here at Terre Haute.

It is not at all possible that I shall be able to get out to Kansas City this month or next.

My long absence on the trip to Bermuda and my illness since my return have disorganized my plans and it will be some time before I shall be able to make my next trip to the Western states. It is possible that I may go to California later in the season as there is a campaign there in progress in which I am much interested, and if I go out to the coast I shall make it a point to stop at Kansas City if possible to have an hour or two in your inspiriting companionship if you are still there.

I am also expecting to have to make a trip to New York some time next month but I shall put that off for a few weeks if I can so arrange it.

As for your coming here I need not say that you {can} make the schedule to suit yourself. You have the right of way and you can come at your convenience and the joy will be great when your flaming dome rounds the curve and comes into sight.

I can understand perfectly why you have not yet been able to do the novel, "Neighbor." That will have to come in its regular order and in its own time. You are a prodigious worker, you grow steadily greater, and with steady steps you are approaching your masterpiece.

I am sure your novel on the preachers will make the gentry of the "cloth" see red and shake their pulpits throughout the country. They are among the mainstays of the existing order. To obtain their license they must share in its corruption. They wear the livery of Christ in the service of his betrayers and crucifiers. They are all followers of the Prince of Peace until Wall street sounds the tocsin of war and then they all wrap the flag about the pulpit with patriotic unction and join in the howl of the pack for blood and slaughter. But after all most of them are to be pitied rather than condemned. Many of them are so weak, so abject from fawning that it seems cruel to scourge them. They are more menial in their mental and moral abasement than are the scavenger-slaves in the wage-pens.

But there are the "higher-ups" who voluntarily sell their souls to Mammon that they may fawn at the feet of the ruling masters and dress in purple and fine linen and riot and rot in "high living," and they deserve no mercy. Newton Dwight Hillis,[2] the ministerial prostitute, is a fair specimen of these intellectual and moral degenerates.

I am enclosing a little acknowledgment to dear Ethel Barrymore, supposing she is still there and that you will be able to hand it to her. You were very kind in enclosing her beautiful and flattering message. Her handwriting may not be Spencerian but her head and heart are in good working order.

The letter from Comrade Birkhead is nearly all poetry. It touches me to the heart. I can see him clearly, I catch his spirit, and I reach out and hail him brother. He is the rare preacher who atones for the entire tribe. The choice spirit, the royal soul of him, glow in all his lines. I know him and I love him. Kindly hand him the enclosed note. You are both lucky to have each other and you will certainly be mutually and creatively inspiring.

Theodore is able to be up again but still weak.[3] This means the flesh only. His spirit is always the same. He joins me as does my wife in love to you and a thousand endearing wishes.

Always yours steadfastly,
Eugene V. Debs

TLS, NSyU, Dorothy Thompson Collection.

1. Lewis spoke on "Flaming Youth and the Church" and "Some Rebels I Have Known" at All Souls' Unitarian Church in Kansas City on April 11 and 18, 1926. *Kansas City Star,* April 10, 1926.

2. Newell Dwight Hillis (1858-1929) was the pastor of Plymouth Congregational Church in Brooklyn and the leader of American clergymen who supported World War I. His sermons and lectures were printed and distributed by the government during the war and he toured the country urging the purchase of Liberty Bonds. Following the war his promotion of investments in Canadian timberlands ruined a number of investors who brought suit against him, and a cerebral hemorrhage in 1924 terminated his active ministry.

3. In a letter to David Karsner, May 8, 1926, Debs wrote that Theodore Debs's wife, Gertrude, "came very near passing on and Theodore utterly broke down after his prolonged day and night vigils." InTI, Debs Collection.

Sinclair Lewis to EVD

May 16, 1926
Kansas City, Missouri

Dear Gene:—

God bless you for your fine long letter, and for the letters to Birkhead and Ethel Barrymore. I have delivered Mr. Birkhead's letter to him, and I will try to get the other to Ethel though I don't know exactly where she is—she is out on the road touring.

Curse it, if you do come through Kansas City, and I shall not be here because I am leaving tomorrow for the woods of northern Minnesota where I shall get a cabin and work all summer.

Last night you were formally canonized and whether or not you like to be a saint (which I suppose will necessarily include being a

Catholic) you are now stuck for it because the job is done. I was dining with Birkhead, the Rev. William L. Stidger[1] and Edwin Markham, who is here for a couple of days as Stidger's guest, and they all agreed that the one real honest-to-God saint of whom they had ever known was Eugene V. Debs. Of course, I defended you and said that you were a thoroughly bad actor, and a drinker of liquor, but they threw me out and there you are stuck with a halo for keeps. But perhaps a halo will be lighter for summer wear than a straw hat.

I don't know what my address is going to be in northern Minnesota, but I will be sending you a note bye and bye when I get settled, so don't trouble to answer this.

God bless you Gene!

Ever.
Sinclair Lewis

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. William Leroy Stidger (1885-1949) was pastor of the Linwood Boulevard Church in Kansas City from 1925 to 1929 and later was a nationally prominent radio preacher, syndicated religion columnist, and author of a score of books of collected sermons and related materials.

Carl Sandburg to EVD

May 18, 1926
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Gene—

Thank you for good words of many kinds you send. I am glad you like the Lincoln book. Sometime I hope to do an extended sketch of you that will have some of the breath and feel of the Lincoln. Luck and health be yours.

Carl [Sandburg]

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

George R. Kirkpatrick to EVD

May 20, 1926
Chicago, Illinois

My dear Gene:

Replying to your letter of May 17:

You did, indeed, send me a letter addressed to you by Comrade

Whitlock. This letter was presented at Pittsburgh in due course along with other matters in the N.E.C. Agenda. The letter was brought back to this office and, with other material, put in the file basket regularly. Unhappily, I cannot now place my hands upon that letter, though I have searched the files. I shall search further and hustle it straight to you if I can get it.

Today I am asking Comrade Whitlock to send me a copy of the letter that I may hustle it off to you.

Yes, I recall very distinctly your telling me that your name should be withheld should you be presented for membership on the N.E.C. Fearing that at the time this matter came up for consideration in the Convention I might be out of the room, I conveyed your message carefully to Comrade Hillquit, explaining just why you urged that you should not be considered for re-election. I recall that he seemed strongly disposed that you should be re-elected. It turned out that when this matter came up, I was out of the room. Just what Comrade Hillquit said at the time I do not know.[1]

On this question I have more information now than I had ten seconds ago. My stenographer, who took notes at the Convention, tells me that Comrade Hillquit presented your name with manifest pleasure and that the audience arose to its feet instantly, manifesting great enthusiasm; so, you see how they feel about it. I cannot help saying that your name is of great value as a member of the N.E.C. and it seems to me you do not need to worry about 'non-performance of duties' when everybody understands that, should you not be as active as you would naturally wish to be, it will be on account of your health. I hope you will let your name stand in the list. It would be distinctly hurtful if, officially, you withdrew in every way from the party.

I note what you say with respect to the management of the finances of this office for the last five or six years. I was deeply impressed by a letter you wrote to Comrade White more than a year ago relative to the same matter (By the way, Gene, that was a terrible letter and nearly broke Bertha's heart.) and by a letter you recently wrote to Comrade Henry along the same lines, and I am likewise impressed by this paragraph in your letter to me of the 17th.

Such comment from you has disposed me for many months to disconnect myself from this office. In addition, I have felt that I am not much of an office man. This is one of the reasons why I have steadily been disinclined to assume the duties of the National Executive Secretary, but this feeling has been vastly augmented by your saying at a meeting of the N.E.C. last October that you thought $40.00 a week would be quite right, under the circumstances, for King and

the rest of us.[2] $40.00 a week now is equivalent to about $20.00 a week in 1914. It seems impossible that you should be forgetful of the advantage you have over some of us who have devoted all our time for many years to the party. You have good shelter and paid for. We have not. You have, at least, some income aside from fees for party service and we have not. When I say we, I mean such men as Henry, Herman,[3] King and myself. In consequence of our activities and prolonged devotion to the movement, we are black-listed in the matter of getting remunerative employment in several ways in which we might otherwise get employment. Perhaps you are black-listed in the same sense, but, as your age advances, you are in no danger whatever of being thrown into the street, shelterless, desperate for food and clothing.

As for myself, two things I can do fairly well. While still in college some of my teachers urged me to prepare for work on the Chautauqua. I have been many times called a fool since for not speaking for organizations that have money. I can also teach with some effectiveness. Today, of course, there is nothing open to me in the way of lectures or in the way of a position as a teacher. This does not make me sore at all. The Socialist Party has furnished me my only opportunity to express myself in a manner that did not amount to intellectual prostitution. I have always felt that I owe the Socialist Party a great deal on this account. And you must have been grateful a thousand times when you realized that the Socialist Party gave you your only opportunity to go through life expressing yourself on the platform without being an intellectual prostitute. You and I might say that we have sacrificed a great deal for the Party but we would have sacrificed a great deal more in being intellectual prostitutes if, as speakers, we had delivered messages satisfactory to the ruling class.

To have escaped prostitution has meant everything to me.

Now, in connection with the management of the Party's finances by this office. You say, "If a Party of 8000 dues-paying members cannot organize itself on a self-sustaining basis, it is incapable of self management and can scarcely claim the right to exist."

We have, indeed, urged the comrades to pay their dues and have gone to them repeatedly for extra funds. So far as I have helped to do this, it is because of the impossibility of working a miracle somehow in getting the money otherwise. I am quite unashamed of it. If you know of any other way to get money, I wish you would make the suggestion. If you think we should close our doors rather than discontinue some such method, the way is wide open for an Executive Question.

You have suggested that we move to Halsted Street and take a

room costing $8.00 or $10.00 a month. That would simply be a confession that the Party is dead and that we are quietly trying to secrete the corpse and denying the demise. I have heard you speak bitterly of the behavior of the comrades in not paying up. Well, the comrades are as they are pretty much in consequence of the terrible war which affected nearly everyone on earth more or less in the same way.

When, in your letter to Bertha, you spoke scornfully of our comrades and compared the situation of our Party with the Milk Drivers' Union, the argument was not conclusive for me. The Milk Drivers' Union members get immediate economic rewards for joining the union, very stiff rewards too. They are protected, also, as employes and have shorter hours as a consequence. They are not expected in any way to be idealists and wait for the indefinite future to arrive with that elusive thing called justice. Our comrades have no immediate economic rewards. We are always at a disadvantage in appealing to them because of this. A Milk Drivers' Union member must pay in a lump sum as his initiation fee, not to mention his monthly dues, the equivalent of from 10 to 20 years' total Socialist Party dues. Of course they can buy our headquarters and we, in comparison, look ridiculous.

Frankly, dear Gene, I resent your contemptuous comparison when it is coupled with bitter comment on the mismanagement of this office with respect to its finances.

You seem disinclined to have the Jewish comrades approached for means with which to keep the American Appeal going. When the Forward Association gave the National Office the Organization Fund, probably no person had less bread to eat in consequence of it, and when the Forward Association gave you between 15 and 20 thousand dollars, no particular person wore cheaper clothing in consequence of it. Surely you felt this way about it or you would have scorned to take such a big sum under any circumstances whatever. Personally, I am extremely glad you got the money. No one is injured by it and I am so glad you were thus made able to share some good luck with dear Theodore, who has poured his life into the movement through your office uncomplainingly for many, many years. The sacrifice has been beautiful, very beautiful indeed, and I assure you that in your splitting fifty-fifty with Theodore, or something like that, I am perfectly delighted.

The American Appeal is very much in need of your good offices in connection, perhaps with Berger and Hillquit, in presenting the matter of the financing of the Appeal in part by means of a subsidy from the Forward Association. The presumption is that the profits the Forward Association is able to win are available for good causes.

If the American Appeal is not a good cause, the purpose being the rebuilding of the Socialist movement, then the Forward Association should not be approached. If it is a good cause, it should be approached. The whole matter should be presented to them, it seems to me, in a fraternal, business-like manner.

Comrade Henry is about to address a few score of comrades with means in the building up of a Sustaining Fund for the American Appeal. It will, however, be necessary to have the special help of the Forward Association. It would simply be unbelievable that you, under present and recent circumstances, would be too proud to join comrades Hillquit and Berger, and perhaps others, to secure the necessary subsidy.

I cannot believe, dear Gene, that after having $15,000 or $20,000 yourself from the Forward comrades, {(more than the total received by the Nat'l Off. and the Appeal combined)} you would decline to have them take their reasonable part in the further promotion of the American Appeal. You, yourself, have said that the American Appeal would be equal to 100 organizers.

I would not at all urge that you go on speech-making trips. They are too hard for you. You have done your share super-abundantly; but the use of your great name, perhaps a trip to New York or some other co-operation, in the preparation of an address would, I surely hope, seem good to you and not an unreasonable demand upon your energies and time.

It is quite clear that, in your judgment, I was dead wrong in urging an associate editor on the American Appeal. We probably did not get the right associate editor, but we certainly needed one and need one now. You thought that King and I could put it over, but I knew that it would simply mean forcing me to contribute two or three extra hours each day for indefinite months. This is a good deal to take out of one man's life, when his pay is simply equivalent to $20.00 in 1914. I did help for six weeks and it cost me just as I have indicated above. It did not seem fair. To make the paper what it ought to be and must be to win, Comrade King needs help right now. I have no compunctions of conscience over that matter at all.

I am so eager to get away that I told Comrade Henry ten days ago I would freely give the National Office $50.00 if he could let me go at once. I am, indeed, eager to get away. Two or three times I have told the Committee frankly that I did not want this job. I have not been taken very seriously in the matter—which does not please me particularly. Last fall I passed up a business opportunity which, it was perfectly evident, would have enabled me to rapidly and certainly become economically safe. I passed it up because I was tied here. The

fact that a man has put in a quarter of a century in this movement is not convincing evidence that he should continue to do so until he is kicked out as a down-and-out, shelterless and threadbare. When I have discontinued my present connection with the party I shall certainly not be disconnected in spirit, intention or disposition to keep on helping in every possible way, but I could not be chained here and receive repeated frank statements or intimations that I am willing to take more than I should from the funds of the party I have sought to serve, especially when those comments come from the Chairman of our Organization and, in some ways, the real leader of our Party.

I am glad, indeed, to be here just now helping Comrade Henry a bit and after I have gone out of the office, I shall be happy to come back, without charge, to serve evenings or an occasional day at a time, to the end that the thing we all love may be kept going.

With respect to Comrade Barnes'[4] disconnection with the paper management, we will talk that over when you come up.

It amuses me, dear Gene, to observe that some comrades infer from my more or less good nature that I am an easy mutt and a stupid "mush of concession." Dear Comrade Barnes was one of these.

My letter is growing quite too long.

Here's a good cheer to both you and Theodore.

Always—always fraternally
George R. Kirkpatrick

P.S. You speak of the frankness of your letter. Of course this letter is likewise frank. I see no reason why we should not be perfectly frank, but my frankness, I assure you, does not indicate any diminution of friendship.

The Socialist {movement} will rise or fall with the American Appeal. Surely after all your years {of party service} you will not fail in standing by the paper which, of course (as we all assumed) must be subsidized for a year or more. The crisis has arrived.

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Debs was reelected to the national executive committee of the party at the Pittsburgh convention.

2. The salaries of the managing editor and the business manager of the *American Appeal* were fixed at $55 per week at the NEC meeting in New York on October 9-10, 1925. "Minutes of the National Executive Committee Meeting, Breslin Hotel, New York City," InTI, Debs Collection.

3. Emil Herman was secretary of the Socialist party in Washington state before World War I and in 1918 was sentenced to a ten-year prison term for violation of the Espionage Act. His sentence was commuted in December 1921 and he resumed his service to the party as a speaker and organizer for the party in the Northwest. *Socialist World*, March 1922; *American Appeal*, January 1, 1926.

4. J. Mahlon Barnes had served for a time as temporary business manager of the *American Appeal.*

EVD to Pauline Rauschenbusch

May 22, 1926
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Mrs. Rauschenbusch:

This belated acknowledgment of your very kind letter of the 3rd. inst. and the accompanying book and pamphlet is due to severe illness in our family during the last three weeks, I myself having been unable during that time to give attention to my personal correspondence and other affairs. I was unable on that account to attend the Socialist party convention at Pittsburgh beginning May 1st., and for the same reason I am not now at Indianapolis where the state convention of Indiana is being held.

Mrs. Debs and I have carefully read your beautiful and gracious letter and we beg to return our most sincere thanks for the very kind and generous consideration you have shown us.

I had long looked forward to the great pleasure of meeting Doctor Rauschenbusch, your distinguished husband, but the fates somehow denied me that privilege and I felt keenly disappointed at the time of his death to think that, with all I felt I owed him for his great lifework in general and for his high-souled and inspiring example to me in particular, I had never been permitted to take him by the hand and to tell him how very deep my love was for him, how I admired his sublime courage, his utter unselfishness, his noble idealism, and how I honored him for his whole-hearted consecration to the cause of humanity.

It is indeed gratifying to me to know that I had a place in the great heart of Doctor Rauschenbusch, and though we were not permitted to come into personal contact I am sure we were not separated by the miles that lay between us, but that on the contrary we were in spiritual communion and giving to each other aid and comfort in the trying hours that came to us both, especially during those cruel years of the terrible war. I can well imagine what agony your noble husband suffered, and how his tender, sensitive nature was shocked and outraged by the horrors of the war, and I do not wonder that his great, loving heart was broken and ceased to beat during that frightful ordeal.

His was the prophetic vision and the martyr spirit and he assuredly

did not live and struggle and suffer in vain. He wrought with that divine consecration and self-effacement that made him and his work immortal. He lived and will live through generations yet unborn for he was indeed of "the few, the immortal few, who were not born to die."

Please accept our added thanks for the inscribed copy of "Prayers of the Social Awakening," a most precious little volume, kindly sent by you, in the pages of which we shall find comfort and inspiration.

The pamphlet containing "The Record," issued by the Rochester Theological Seminary, and containing the Memorial of Doctor Rauschenbusch will be carefully gone over and in due time returned as requested. For the privilege of glancing through the pages of this precious document we feel grateful to you beyond expression.

And now thanking you again and again for your loving kindness and with all affectionate esteem and good wishes to you and all of your blessed household from Mrs. Debs and myself I remain,

Yours faithfully,
Eugene V. Debs

TLS, NRAB.

Bartolomeo Vanzetti to EVD

May 31, 1926
Boston, Massachusetts

Dear Comrade and Maestro:—

I have read in The Daily Worker of May 27, your letter-appeal to the American Labor in our behalf.[1] For Nick and I and our dear ones, I thank you with all my heart for that letter in which you putted all yourself and worth of better time and better men.

I learnt to-day that the Massachusetts S. Court have repelled the quest of the defence for a re-hearing; and that the District Attorney of the Norfolk County minds again to fix a near date for our sentensing.

The plutocratic press-editorial on the Court decision was as bestial as the decision itself.

Hating us mortally, believing to free himself by killing us, the enemy is going to execute us as soon as possible. Once, we ded, the enemy thinks, the agitation will stop and the dangers of retaliation and revenge, dissappear. And it seems to happen very soon. But I am innocent, my faith is firmer than ever, the infamous death will not stain

our names; people are positive of our innocence, and we will pass sure that our blood and our name will be rivendicated.

Dear Comrade Debs, I am sorry that your health is not quit well now, and I wish you a good health. Have care of yourself and do not whorry about us. Mankind need you; others will take our place.

And, please, do not bother to answer this. I can receive and benefit your sentiments and thoughts even if you do not answer by mail.

With figlial love I am yours,
Bartolomeo Vanzetti

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. "Debs Appeals to Save Sacco and Vanzetti," *American Appeal,* May 29, 1926.

EVD to D. C. Westenhaver

June 3, 1926
Terre Haute, Indiana

Dear Judge Westenhaver:

You are quite likely aware of the fact that there has been considerable discussion and difference of opinion as to the status of my citizenship since my conviction in your Court several years ago. Upon my release from prison I was given to understand from various sources that seemed authoritative that my citizenship had been forfeited, or at least impaired to an extent by reason of said conviction that I was deprived of the right to vote, and consequently I have not since attempted the exercise of the elective franchise. Quite recently, however, a lawyer of high standing, after a thorough investigation as to the legal aspects of the case, expressed the opinion in writing that I never had been disfranchised by reason of my conviction in your Court, that you had made no pronouncement to that effect, and that so far as said conviction was concerned my citizenship remained intact and my right to vote unimpaired and unquestioned.

Meanwhile, however, the question of the restoration of my citizenship was raised in Congress and made an issue by a resolution in the House and a petition in the Senate demanding full restoration of my constitutional and civil rights as an American citizen. When the matter was thus brought to the attention of Congress the administration leaders in both branches declared that my citizenship had never been forfeited nor my right to the franchise revoked by reason of my conviction in your Court or by any act of the federal government.

As I am still in doubt in the matter I venture to ask your opinion as to whether my conviction in your Court resulted in the forfeiture of my citizenship and the revocation of my elective franchise and my civil rights, and if so if such forfeiture and revocation are still operative and binding.

An answer at your convenience will much oblige

Yours very truly,
[Eugene V. Debs]

TLc, InTI, Debs Collection.

D. C. Westenhaver to EVD

June 5, 1926
Cleveland, Ohio

Dear Sir:

Replying to your letter of the 3rd inst., respecting the effect of your conviction and sentence upon your qualifications as citizen and elector I trust you understand that my position prevents me from giving legal opinions, and that you should regard my reply entirely as furnishing information in response to a request. Upon this basis, and in order that you may not feel that a failure to reply was for any other reason or might be a discourtesy, I am venturing to make some suggestions on this subject which you may submit to your legal adviser for his consideration. Suggest to him whether or not a person who is once a citizen of the United States does not always remain a citizen unless he abandons his country and goes to live in another country and voluntarily acquires there a new citizenship, or in those limited situations in which a naturalized citizen may have his naturalization cancelled. Now I assume that you are and have always been a citizen of the United States. My information is that you were born in the United States, or if not so born therein, that your parents were naturalized before you arrived at the age of 21 years, in which event, my understanding of the law is that you are a full citizen of the United States despite the conviction and sentence.

Consider also this further fact. The Constitution of the United States does not confer the right to vote at elections, either State or national. It establishes certain qualifications for elective federal officials. The XVth Amendment merely provides that the rights of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous

condition of servitude. The XIXth amendment provides that the rights of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex. These provisions, as I recall, have been held by the United States Supreme Court not to confer the right to vote or the privileges of an elector, but merely to prevent the United States or any State from denying the right to vote because of race, color, sex, or previous condition of servitude. In this way, laws of the States which limited the right to vote to white persons or to male persons, have been overridden and the right to vote has been obtained despite qualifications.

If your counsel reaches the conclusion that the foregoing suggestions are in fact sound, then the answer to the inquiries propounded in your letter must be found in the Constitution and the laws of the State of Indiana of which you are a citizen and resident. I am not familiar with those laws and they are not now accessible to me. For purposes of illustration, however, I take the State of Ohio. Its Constitution provides certain qualifications for voters or electors. Generally speaking, every citizen of the United States, male or female, over the age of twenty-one, shall be entitled to vote. Certain residential qualifications are also required. The particular disqualification in which you are interested is as follows: "The General Assembly shall have power to exclude from the privilege of voting or of being eligible to office, any person convicted of perjury, bribery, or other infamous crime."

You will perceive, therefore, one must turn to the statutes of Ohio to answer the question whether your conviction would prevent you from voting in Ohio. It is unnecessary to review these statutes except to say that they have disqualified persons convicted of certain crimes until pardoned. An inquiry along these lines as to the constitutional statutes of Indiana should answer the question of whether or not you are disqualified from voting in that State.

The qualifications, however, to hold office are different in many respects from the qualifications which entitle a citizen of the United States to vote. The Constitution of the United States has provided certain disqualifications. For instance, age limits for senators and representatives, and birth within the United States for the presidential office. What other disqualifications are or have been provided either by constitutional or federal statute is a matter your counsel probably has already investigated. In the State of Ohio, unless otherwise provided by the Constitution or by statute, any one who is by law a voter or elector, may hold office. An inquiry in Indiana along the same lines

will be necessary to determine whether any disqualification exists to hold office in that State as a result of your conviction.

The suggestions will indicate to you and your counsel that the questions propounded in your letter are much complicated and depend upon a great variety of constitutions, statutes, and conditions. It might even be true that neither the United States Constitution or its statutes impose any disqualification either to vote or to hold federal office as a result of the conviction, and yet, disqualification to vote may be imposed by a State Constitution or statute, or to hold a State office. It might also be true that Congress has no power to remove these disqualifications imposed by the State Constitution and statute in so far as voting at any election is concerned, for the reason already stated, that the XVth and XIX Amendments merely prevent discrimination because of race, color, sex, or previous condition of servitude.

These suggestions are for the information and consideration of you and your counsel. They are not intended to express any opinion, legal or official. I shall be pleased if you find them of any service.

Very truly yours,
D. C. Westenhaver
United States District
Judge

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

Paxton Hibben[1] to EVD

June 19, 1926
New York City

Dear Comrade:

I have been out of town, and my secretary wisely held the enclosed receipt[2] for Comrade Debs's generous contribution to our work for the Russian children until my return, knowing that as a fellow Hoosier and a life-long admirer of Comrade Debs I would want to write the letter thanking you, myself.

It is, of course, just what so many millions of your friends, all over this country, would have expected of you—that the plight of the children in Russia just now would appeal to you. But it is not just that alone that moves me so deeply about your fine response to our appeal for the Russian children. It is that, from the very beginning, you have been generous and fine in your view of the tremendous

experiment that is going on in Russia, and courageous in your expression of your sympathy with it.

I too have watched the Russian experiment with eager eyes and heart full of hope. It is not perfect. It may never succeed. But what tends to make it perfect and what gives it its best chance of success is precisely the sort of broad generosity of understanding that you have displayed towards what that dark people have undertaken.

I feel, as you also do, I know, that the world can never again be the world it was before the dawn broke in Russia. And every little we can do—you and I and millions like us all over the world—is just so much earnest that the world in which Russia today holds aloft the torch will be more secure for peace and brotherhood than anything yet conceived.

On behalf of our Committee and the Russian children you have so generously helped, I do thank you.

Fraternally yours,
PAXTON HIBBEN

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Paxton Pattixon Hibben (1880-1928) was born in Indianapolis and earned a bachelor's degree at Princeton in 1903 and a master's degree at Harvard in 1904. He held various diplomatic posts, including service in the American embassy at St. Petersburg under Theodore Roosevelt and William Howard Taft, and worked as a correspondent for the Associated Press before World War I, in which he served in the army. A strong supporter of the Russian Revolution and of the Soviet regime, Hibben was secretary of the American Committee for the Relief of Russian Children during the 1920s and, at the time of his death, his ashes were sent to Russia for burial in Moscow.

2. The receipt was for a $20 donation from Debs.

Bartolomeo Vanzetti to EVD

June 26, 1926
Boston, Massachusetts

Dear Comrade Debs:—

I don't remember if I wrote to you after having received your optimistic answer to the pessimistic letter that I had written to you after the negative response of the Mass.'s Supreme Court. Any how, I have began this letter because I wish to tell you many things that are happening here.

On the 23rd of this month a prisoner was freed. On the evening

of the same day, the capitalistic press of Boston gave the following version of the fact:

"Castellucci is Set Free"

"Released from the State Prison on Proving His Innocence James Castellucci, sentenced to the State Prison last November for from 10 to 12 years for robbery while armed, walked out the Middlsexes Superior Court to-day a free man, after serving 7 months of his sentence. During that time he has convinced the court of his innocence."

"Positively Identified."

Castellucci was convicted by a jury of holding up, robbing and severely beating Henry White of Medford on Oct., 22 1925. White told the jury at the time of the trial that he positively identified Castellucci as his assailant.

The defendant told the jury that although he was picked up at the scene of the crime, he was innocent. He sayd he was out automobiling with a married woman, whose name he would not divulge. Judge George Flynn sentenced Castellucci to prison. Since he has been at the prison Castellucci {has written} wrote letters to Judge Flynn and the district Attorney's office denying that he had anything to do with the crime.

Convinces Judge.

he had previously served a term in prison and was on parole for another terms when he was found guilty of the hold-up of White. (1)

In his letters to Judge Flynn, *Castellucci reasoned that a man who had his record in crime would never have remained at the scene after having committed a robbery; that on his being released on parole he had given up a life of crimes; that when he was approached by his cronies to hold up a certain doctor, he refused and warned the doctor of the contemplated hold-up.*

He gave the judge the name of the married woman and the physician. Judge Flynn investigated and found that he was telling the truth about the case.

To day Castellucci was brought from prison, and when Atty. John W. Connelley, acting for the prisoner filed a motion to set aside the verdict, Judge Flynn granted it. Ass. Dist-Atty Bishop of the Middlesex county, who had prosecuted the case, then nol-prossed the indictment charging Castellucci with robbery.

Castellucci walked from the dock to thank Judge Flynn for his act.

Explains Action.

Judge Flynn looked the prisoner in the eyes and said: "I hope I

have make no mistake. And I hope you will live a streight life in the future."

In explaining is act {today,} Judge Flynn said he was moved by justice and that notwithstanding the testimony of the men held up positively identifying Castellucci as his assailant, there was a strong probability that the defendent was not guilty.

Castellucci previous to his last sentence served one term of from 5 to 7 years for robbery, and was on parole for a 10 to twelfe years term at State prison when accused and convicted of holding-up White. He was given a 10 to 12 year term in 1918, when he was found guilty of robbery in connection with the hold-up of the paymaster of the American Net and and Twine Company of Canbridge.

He served four years of is sentence and was paroled on *Nov., 12, 1924.*"

I took this report from the Boston Traveler, June 23. The Traveler has been one of the most ferocious of our enemies. But this is not all. On the following days, the Boston and New York American-press and the Italo American press, as well, are making a knight out of the said Castellucci, saying that the release shall be regard as a reward and as an honor of and to his chivalry. Since he preferred to be convicted of a crime of which he was innocent, rather than to *disgrace a woman and get freed.*

So let us seeing who this Bayard is, his record, and, *if it is the first time that he has been honored and rewarded for this . . . chivalry.*

First of all: The capitalistic press's merceneries, who have for six consequitive years called us rogues and culprits, who have inverted facts, falsifed and distorted fact, and lied in every manner to doomm us are not only calling Castellucci a knight, but lieing and hindering facts to favor him.

There are prisoners here who remember that Castellucci was here on the 1910, serving a short sentence—presumably, 3 to 5. He was parolled, then; thought it is sure that he had already by confine in the State Juvanil Prison of Concord, for robbery. That is positive but, beside that, he had been in some other juvanil prison, beside that of Concord. He was, then, already a recidive offender when he came here for the first time, and he has been here 4, and not three times, as the press says. Yet, he was parolled. It prove that it is long time that the Massachusettes Prison and court authorities are honoring and rewarding Bayard Castellucci fromm good, many years. When I came here he was serving his 10 to twelfe years term. But again he went out on parolle thought he had been punished several times for robbing, fighting and other offences. But . . . for a knight . . . ! And I was still here when he came back last November to serve is bit of

10 to 12 years. I am still here now that he was rewarded after 7 month of detection.

Between one and another of his robberies and terms, he has been interpreter (Italian) in one superior court. Here, Castellucci is always interpreter Very often, they all spy ones the others. Take, for one example, the Morelli's band.[1] Morelly was the leader and he spyed and caused the arrest of several of his own subordinates. When he was brought to the Atlanta Federal Prison, his associates who were already there, for having been betrayed by him, wanted to kill him. To avoid the murdering, Morelli was transfered to another federal prison—by the authorities.

It remains the fact of his "having been with a married woman, automobiling on the scene of the crime, at the time (15 minutes after it) of the crime."

Well, were was the woman when he was arrested? But "he named the woman to Judge Flynn—who found that the fact was true." How, when did he found that the fact was true? Not less than a month after the trial, at least—and how? A woman must have told: yes, I was with the man."

And who will be surprised if the several Castellucci brothers, all well acquiated and in good relations with {the} police and with the courts have succeed to find "the woman—a woman who knew before to testify, in segret, that her name would have been kept covered?

Castellucci was positively identified by Henry White, the man who had been severely beated and robbed. It is important to know that Castellucci has a facial characteristich which makes him distinguable amon thousands of men: He has no eyes-lids and the skin around his eyes has a peculiar, eyes-striking, red bound all around his eyes.

All together, this is the case: a robber from his boyhood is arrested alone, in an automobile, on the scene of a robbery, few minutes after it. At the trial, he has not the least defence: the man, robbed and beated recognized positively the defendent has his assailent, who has a remarkable facial characteristic. The victim recognized the assailent from among many other men. The defendent has nothing to say exept that he was innocent, but cannot proved it because he was with a married woman. The jury convicted him.

~~But the presiding honor Flynn found that "thought the defendent was positively identified~~

Judge Flynn, the presiding judge, gave him a mild sentence (relatively to the crime and the time) and, in freeing him after only 7 month of detention, he explains: "I am moved by justice, because, *notwithstanding the testimony of the man held-up positively identifying Castellucci has his assailant, there was a strong possibility that the defendent*

was not guilty." We do not contest this honor. We only relives the great difference between the honor Thayer's[2] conduct against us, and the honor Flynn conduct in favor of a Castellucci who may be a knight as much as you please—but who is also an abitual bandit.

Honor Flynn sticks with his conscience, it seems. Honor Thayer with the jury—to be sure.

and courts; "of" he got something on them."

Voices, words, wind. But the facts remain . . . such.

Let look at the excuses of and for this liberation. "In is letters to Judge Flynn, Castellucci reasoned out that the man who had his record in crimes would never have remained on the scene after committing a robbery."

Well, I have no vocation to inquisite—But even a Katzmann[3] would prove a Demostene in confuting such affermation—and drolling it.

"That on his being being released on parole he had given up a life of crime."

To expect that a consunted criminal, in the position of Castellucci would had said: "On my being released on parole I have continued a life of crime"; would be not less silly than to expect Judge Flynn to tell him, "I put you on the street and I hope you will live a crook life in the future.

"He told that when he was approached by his cronies to hold up a certain doctor, he refused and he warned the doctor of the comtemplated hold up." And it was found to be the truth.

That has nothing to do with the crime committed afterward. Every man of experience knows that. The professional criminals are misfortunate failed very low. To "squize," spy and betray, is common among them. Almost in every criminal trials, there is one who turn in spy against his associated to safe himself for the parole Board. Those disperates who fear rats, keep always their mouth shut when Castellucci hangs around. Such is the exalted Bayard, fearless, stainless Castellucci

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Judge Flynn has recently sentenced a man for from 25 to 30 years for robbery. None was beated or hurted at the robbery for which the man was convicted. The convicted himself had no record exept of filed fine for high speed.

Judge Webster Thayer gave me 12 to 15 years for having been framed of an attempted robbery at which noone was {been} beated or hurted.

But Judge Flynn gave 10 to 12 years to Castellucci, found guilty

"of holding, robbing and severely beating Henry White—that was at least his 4 offence, assuming that he had only been at Concord once and here three times. The knights are not knaves.

"Judge Flynn looked the prisoner in the eyes and said: "I hope I have made no mistake. And I hope you will live a straight life in the future."

I too, hope so, and am sure to meet the knights here again, if my hunger will not prevail to soon upon Sacco and I. But Judge Flynn, in saying that, he was either ashame of himselfe, or he has no eyes to see the . . . human nature.

Here, many undervoices are circulating, murmuring that "there were women"; of "three brothers all in good relations and acquaitance with police-stations and we challenge all the police and all the capitalistic press' hireling and knaves to find out a single spot, a single precedent in our record, a single police who migh have however "warned or repriminded us."

On my intering in this prison I made the acquaitance with many inmated. There was a little Italian . . . and a great story on him.

A man had been killed and burried in his farm's land. He and another man were arrested on suspect. The other man had a brother who run away and his still latitant. The two arrested were charched of having killed and burried the victim in order to rob him of his few hundred dollars. The man who I knew offered an alibi: He was sleeping with a girl on the night of the crime.

I do not know if he was trial for first degree murder; and acquited, or if the girl testimony saved him. The other man was trialed and convicted of first degree murder. He was exeptionally strong and resisted appolingly to the electric current. Shot after shot of a tremendous current were repeatedly discharged on him, who could not die. His cloth and his flesh were literally burning before than his heart ceased to beat. The unfortunate had protested his innocence from the time of his arrest to the moment in with the death sealed his lips for ever.

He was executed few month before my coming into the prison. Not only the prisoners were then yet

AL (incomplete), InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Joe Morelli and his brothers, Fred and Frank, were the leaders of a New England gang accused by the Sacco-Vanzetti defense of being implicated in the Braintree murders of which Sacco and Vanzetti were found guilty.

2. Judge Webster Thayer (1857-1933) presided at the Sacco-Vanzetti trial and five times refused to set aside their conviction.

3. Frederick Gunn Katzmann, the prosecuting attorney in the Sacco-Vanzetti trial.

Mary Brown (Mrs. W. T.) Meeks to EVD

July 1, 1926
Jacksonville, Florida

Dear Mr Debs:

Have you ever heard from a comrade from way down South? There are not many comerades here, so I thought I would write you a few lines, so you would know that there are a few here anyway, that think of our "Gene."

My father has been a socialist ever since his first vote, and I was taught socialism, from a child on. My parents have often heard you speak when we lived up North. So we feel as if we knew you personally. I am a *born* and *bred* socialist.

Until five years ago we lived in New York, My parents and I. Then we came down here, where I married. I am now teaching my husband and children to see "the light."

I have a little girl four years old and a little boy six weeks old.

I think so much of you, Mr Debs, that I have named my boy after you; in the hopes that he will grow up to be as good & true man as you are.

I have your life story written by David Karsten and one of your printed pictures; but I want something more. Gene, would you write me just a few lines; with your name; so that I can treasure them for my boy. And after you have gone, and he is grown, I can show them to him and he can maybe feel as if he knew you too; and be proud to be named after a man whom the world will honor some day.

If only I could write and express my feelings, but I am a poor writer. Just take this letter as {one} from one who loves and honors you and hopes her children will do the same.

Mrs. W. T. Meeks
(née Mary H. Brown)
Box 371-Route 6
Jacksonville, Fla.

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

Leonard D. Abbott to EVD

July 16, 1926
Boston, Massachusetts

Dear 'Gene,

I saw both Sacco & Vanzetti in their respective prisons today. I am writing an article about their case. When I said to Vanzetti that I expected to write you today, he replied:—"Tell him that I salute him!"

Sincerely & affectionately,
Leonard D. Abbott

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

Bartolomeo Vanzetti to Theodore Debs

August 5, 1926
Boston, Massachusetts

Dear Comrade Theodore Debs:—

This time I address to you because I fear that your Brother, our E. Debs, may still be unwell, and in such case I wish to not disturb him and make him sorry for our trouble. So I pray you to not tell him about this letter, if he is not very well in health.

You may know that the discussion of the new, Madeiros' Motion,[1] has been posponed until next September or later.

The excuse for this new delay is that Judge Thayer has suffered an attack of phneumonia, that at the beginning has not believed the case to be very serious—but that having lately perceived its gravity, ordered an absolute rest to the patient for the rest of the Summer.

The new dist. Atty W.M. Wilbur,[2] had reiteratly declared that he wanted to eletrocute us as soon as possible, and {had} opposed to new dilactions of time, requisted by the defence to the judge, in order to complet the new motion.

Mr. Thompson seems to be glad of this delay; but I am not.

This abrupt, strange new of an illness of which nothing had been said before, appeared so equivocally penned, in the capitalist press, that one can see the lies of it dancing the Charlestown {between} the lines.

My opinion is that they are already determined to deny us a new trial; that they realize the value and seriousness of the new motion;

have nothing to oppose to it; are afraid to deny us a new trial now afraid either for the elections and of the agitation and that for all thise reasons they have planned to drag the case untill after the elections and untill the present agitation and protest will have silenced and stagnated themselves.

If the motion would have been discussed at this time, or if it were to be discussed soon—we could ask the decision of Judge Thayer before the election, with the reason that he would have had time enough to decide.

But as things are going now, it is different, he could say to not have had a reasonable time to answer.

As for the removal of the judge, Mr. Thompson as asked somebody—but it was not accorded.

Good bey—With great heart,
Bartolomeo Vanzetti

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. In November 1925, Celestino Madeiros, a convicted murderer, confessed to the murders of which Sacco and Vanzetti were convicted. Madeiros's confession was the basis of defense attorney William Thompson's appeal for a new trial for Sacco and Vanzetti, which was denied by Judge Thayer in October 1926.

2. Winfield M. Wilbar was Frederick Katzmann's successor as prosecuting attorney of Norfolk County, the venue of the Sacco-Vanzetti case.

Floy Ruth Painter[1] to Theodore Debs

August 9, 1926
Bloomington, Indiana

Dear Mr. Debs:

You and your brother and I feel that I may include both Mrs. Debs will rejoice with me when I tell you that I am to receive my Ph.D. in October. My thesis is practically completed.[2] Its title is, "Eugene V. Debs and His Life Work." I took my final examinations about ten days ago and have passed successfully. I am enclosing a clipping from the school paper which I should like to have returned.

My purpose in writing this note is twofold. First I wish to thank Mr. Eugene Debs for furnishing me with such an interesting study. In the second place, if it is convenient for him, I should like to call at his home for say a couple of hours on this coming Sunday. There are a few points which I wish to clear up and only he or you can help me do it. If you would set an hour, the earlier perhaps the better on

Sunday 9, 10, or any time later I shall be happy to call. Just one thing, do not plan to entertain me as I am coming with a friend who is to do that. But I wish to interview you and your brother on a few points. Now if Mr. Debs is not well enough to see me now, I can write my questions later and you need not bother about the interview.

Sincerely yours,
Floy Ruth Painter

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Floy Ruth Painter (1893-1973) received her bachelor of arts degree from Knox College in Illinois in 1915 and M.A. (1919) and Ph.D. (1926) degrees in history from Indiana University. In 1929, her doctoral dissertation on Debs was published by the Indiana University Graduate Council under the title *That Man Debs and His Life Work.* From 1926 until her retirement in 1959, Painter taught history and social sciences at Ball State Teachers College in Muncie, Indiana. Indiana University Alumni Association to editor, June 3, 1985.

2. In a letter to Theodore Debs, August 1, 1924, Painter thanked him for "the literature you sent me" and assured him that she was "making as thorough an investigation as I can regarding his life and work." InTI, Debs Collection.

John Haynes Holmes to EVD

August 18, 1926
New York City

Dear Mr. Debs—

Word has just come to me that you are still sick[1]—and I cannot refrain from sending you just a word to tell you of my concern, and to convey to you my sympathy. It seems impossible to think of you as ill—you {who} have lived so energetically and momentously all these years; and it seems as though the world grew somehow dark—darker than it is—with you not well and strong. But, alas—even such a soul as yours must defer now and then to the flesh, and make the payment it exacts!

But I count upon you soon being yourself again. There are great days ahead—we cannot meet them without you!—A million hearts are loving you, as they have done these many years, and such love must bring you strength.—No man has been more denounced and persecuted in his time than you—but no man also so truly *loved.* In both cases, it is because you also have truly loved, as did Jesus.

With best wishes to you for a speedy recovery—and affectionate regards to your brother—I remain—

Very sincerely
John Haynes Holmes

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. In a letter to George Sylvester Viereck dated May 7, 1926, Debs wrote that "since our return from Bermuda my wife and myself have been ill as a result of the severe sea-sickness from the effects of which we have not yet recovered." In a letter to Debs, June 7, 1926, Dr. Victor Lindlahr wrote that he was "very sorry to learn of your illness" and urged Debs to "spend a week or two at Elmhurst as my guest." Throughout the summer of 1926, Debs declined speaking engagements and requests for articles, citing poor health as the reason. Theodore Debs to Joseph A. Labadie, July 7, 1926; to Charles H. Babcock, July 29, 1926. InTI, Debs Collection.

Alice Stone Blackwell[1] to EVD

August 26, 1926
Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts

Dear Comrade Debs:

I have been sending The American Appeal to Catherine Breshkovsky,[2] "the Little Grandmother of the Russian Revolution," and she is much pleased with it. She writes:

> "I feel very much obliged for the 'American Appeal,' and I regard this paper as much more interesting than the papers edited by Mr. Sinclair. Also I find that socialist work has made great progress in America compared with the year 1905, when I left your country for the first time. After I read the fresh copy, I send it to George (Lazareff),[3] who is always eager to know all details concerning the U.S.A. . . . Thank you much for giving me a chance to read *the noble Debs.*"

The italics are hers.

Pray do not bother to answer this. I know you are overwhelmed with work and correspondence.

I owe you, or someone in your office, thanks for sending me a press clipping about myself some weeks ago. Your brother's name was on the corner of the envelope. It was ever so good of him to take the trouble when he must be so busy.

Yours always affectionately,
Alice Stone Blackwell

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Alice Stone Blackwell (1857-1950) was the daughter of Lucy Stone, the pioneer American female suffragist, of whom she wrote a biography, *Lucy Stone: Pioneer of Woman's Rights* (1930), and whose work she shared as editor of *Woman's Journal*, a leading suffragist publication. Among other organizations, Blackwell played leadership roles in the National American Woman Suffrage Association, the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and the American Peace Society. A socialist, Blackwell campaigned for Robert La Follette in 1924 and was a member of the Sacco-Vanzetti Defense Committee.

2. Blackwell published a biography of Catherine Breshkovsky, *The Little Mother of the Russian Revolution*, in 1917.

3. In her biography of Catherine Breshkovsky, Blackwell described George Lazareff as "a political exile in Switzerland, who for many years watched over [Breshkovsky's] welfare with great affection, and supplied her with money" (p. 148); Blackwell included a number of letters between Lazareff and Breshkovsky in the biography. In 1917, Lazareff published (in French) a series of pamphlets on the Russian Revolution.

Girolamo Valenti[1] to Theodore Debs

September 1, 1926
New York City

My dear Comrade Theodore Debs:

Following up the telegram which Comrade James Oneil[2] sent to you today at my request, I am forwarding you this to warn you of the possibility of being tricked by the Communists camoulflaging themselves as innocent Anti-Fascisti to obtain Comrade Gene's endorsement of their Anti-Fascisti Alliance, from which we Socialists and progressive elements have seceded as a result of the Communists getting control of it and using it against the Socialist Party.

Having heard that they were going to write Comrade Debs, requesting him to endorse their organization, I kindly asked Comrade James Oneil to send you the telegram above referred to. I sincerely hope that both the telegram and this letter will reach you in time to frustrate any Communist trickery, for, as you well understand, Comrade Debs's endorsement of their Anti-Fascisti Alliance would be detrimental to, and cause much confusion in our ranks, that have seen fit to start a new Anti-Fascisti Alliance named, "Anti-Fascisti League for the Freedom of Italy," and which has been launched with Comrade Debs as honarary chairman.[3]

I now take the opportunity to say to you in answer to yours of the 12th of August that your suggestions will all be strictly observed by us. We will never dare to bother Comrade Debs for any article or similar work, as we know that he is not physically strong. We love Comrade Debs too much to cause him strain of any sort. We only

wish him good health and a long life. We would be satisfied with using his sacred name for our propaganda purposes.

Hoping that this will satisfy you too, and with best wishes to you and Comrade Gene Debs and his family, I remain

Fraternally yours,
Girolamo Valenti

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Girolamo Valenti (1892-1958) was a leader of the Italian Social Democratic party before coming to the United States in 1916 from his native Sicily. He quickly became associated as an organizer and speaker for the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America and other unions and, in the 1920s, edited *Il Nuovo Mondo* and *La Stampa Libera,* Italian-language dailies noted for their opposition to fascism and to Mussolini's rule in Italy. *New York Times,* February 22, 1958.

2. James Oneal's telegram to Theodore and Eugene Debs, September 1, 1926, reported, "Anti-fascist Alliance Split Communists Seek Eugenes Endorsement Better Say Nothing Valentis Letter Follows." InTI, Debs Collection.

3. The *American Appeal,* September 9, 1926, described the Anti-Fascist League for the Freedom of Italy as being "made up largely by Socialists" and determined to "exclude Communists."

George R. Kirkpatrick to Theodore Debs

September 12, 1926
Chicago, Illinois

My Dear Theodore,

You good old scout. I am so delighted that Gene is to go to Lindlahr's, and that you will bring him at once.

Now about the matter of meeting you at the station: You write that unless you advise me to the contrary you will arrive at the Polk Street station 10:35 AM Thursday of the coming week.

I shall be guided by that. I assume that you are willing to go in our car. It is offered in fraternalism {due} to both of you, and also to save a pretty {stiff} taxi hire if possible. Of the pleasure we would have in doing anything of this sort we need not assure you. Both of you know this very well indeed.

Florence[1] could not be at the station, since she is teaching now. And she will be unable to go to the country place either, unless the start is made after school hours. She wants {you} to say and I want you to say—with the very finest frankness, with no fear of being misunderstood—whether you would like to have Nannie[2] or Mrs. Curry[3] with me at the train—to meet you—and to go with Gene

also from the city to the country place. What you write in this respect will be treated with the *utmost* discretion should you prefer to have the MINIMUM {company}, just sufficient for the business—you to look after Gene and me to look after the transportation, doing my best driving and keeping my eye and mind on that job with a minimum of tiresome visiting with Gene. Florence is in the completest accord in this matter all the way. She is so delighted that you are to have Gene soon where he will probably improve;—that's what is in her mind and mine, Gene's improvement in health. And in mine too I assure you.

Now keep {us} informed as to just what you prefer in this matter and your will will be the law. We shall say *nothing to any one* of your coming, unless you indicate that you want Nannie or Mrs. Curry or Henry[4] or any one else. What we want is to *serve* you, serve you *just as you prefer* so far as we possibly can.

To all of this Florence says "Amen!" Florence is somewhat improved as to the hay fever.

Three cheers for the recovery of the Old Sycamore with no emphasis on the "Old" (for I am now nearing sixty you see, and thus not so far behind Gene. We are not old—not on your life.

Write me and say: " . . . Them's orders!"

Most sincerely and fraternally yours unflickeringly,
George R. Kirkpatrick

Pardon the errors. This has been a desperately busy day for me—and I operate the typewriter and noodle machinery even more stupidly than usual)

"K"

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Florence Hall was for many years secretary of the Cook County Socialist party in Chicago and a member of the editorial staff of the *Chicago Socialist. American Appeal*, February 26, 1927. She and George Kirkpatrick were married on July 10, 1926. Florence Hall to EVD, July 5, 1926. InTI, Debs Collection.

2. Probably Nannie Howe, a Chicago friend of both Eugene and Theodore Debs. Theodore Debs to Frances Dickinson, July 2, 1927. InTI, Debs Collection.

3. Mabel Dunlap Curry and her husband, Charles, were living in Chicago at the time. Charles Curry left the faculty at Indiana State Normal in 1925 to join the editorial board of Rand McNally Company in Chicago.

4. Probably William Henry, who was elected national executive secretary of the party at the convention in Pittsburgh in May 1926 and became business manager of the *American Appeal* the same month. *American Appeal*, May 27, 1926.

Theo. G. Harriman[1] to EVD

October 10, 1926
Los Angeles, California

Dear Mr Debs:—

I have been very slow in thanking you for your kind letter of sympathy, and fine tribute to Mr. Harriman.

Please realize that it was not that I failed to appreciate it, and the many beautiful letters and telegrams I received, but simply that I did not feel equal to it. I was ill for some time. Not only is our loss so great, but I realize the world has lost a most valuable man, and at such a crucial time. I have recently learned that you were not in the best of health.

We can ill afford to lose such men as you and Job, and I trust you will steadily improve in health.

Please extend the thanks of my son and myself, also to Mrs Debs.

Sincerely
Theo. G. Harriman

P.S. Please excuse the delay in sending this letter. It has the same fate as some other mail being overlooked.

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Theodosia Gray Harriman was the widow of Job Harriman, Debs's 1900 vice-presidential running mate, who died in October 1925. *New York Times*, October 28, 1925.

Cora Marie Arnold Chavarria to EVD

October 14, 1926
Denver, Colorado

Dear Mr. Debs:

I see by the paper that you are ill in a hospital.[1] This is to say that I hope you will improve in health and be able to help us actively again as we need your leadership. A long time ago you {were in Denver and} you came and talked with me, one memorable morning, and I have always kept what you said in the background of my mind. You have given so much to others. I feel that we can hardly be grateful enough. You have given thought, you have given energy, impetus, to push forward a better way of living for us all. Some day do you

suppose the boundary lines of the different countries will lose their distinctness, and the brotherhood of man gain in favor, and fighting and killing be a lost art, so to speak?

There is something wrong when people are *forced* to fight and kill others. I don't know how to discuss such matters, but I know it isn't right. I don't know how it can be changed, I am trying to say, but you, with your clear insight, must get well, and show us the way!

I hope this will find you improving. You wrote in my birthday book long years ago—you may not remember, but I have not forgotten.

As ever,

Sincerely,
Cora Marie Arnold Chavarria

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Debs returned to Lindlahr Sanitarium at Elmhurst on September 26, 1926.

C. U. Pierson[1] to EVD and Theodore Debs

October 18, 1926
Veta Pass, Colorado

Dear Old time Friend.,

I have just noticed in the Denver Post, an account of you being ill, So for the Sake of the associations we have had Many years ago which left a tender feeling in My heart for you, I am constrained to drop you these few lines and tell you that you have my deepest Sympathy for you in this your hours of affliction. And I Sincerely hope and pray that you May Soon be restored to good health and that I may have the pleasure of Meeting you Once More. I believe we last met when I was a delegate to the first Convention of the A.R.U. held in Chicago, in June 1894. I represented Local Union #66 at Las Vegas, N. Mex. and was active as a Speaker while in Chicago. I also represented Lodge 439 B. of L.F. at the time you were Grand Sec'y & Treas of that Brotherhood and it was then your name was endeared in {the} Memory of us as Railroad Men who were Affiliated with the B. of L.F. I trust that you May be feeling Much better when this letter reaches you.

Yours Sincerely,
C. U. Pierson

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Pierson's letterhead identified him as a partner in Pierson-Pierson, railroad shipping agents.

Mr. and Mrs. Earl V. Hankins[1] to Theodore Debs

October 20, 1926
Hessville, Indiana

My Dear Old Comrade:—

With sad hearts we are writing you these few lines. We are sad because we have lost our great comrade.[2] Yes more than a Comrade because dear old Gene was only God on earth—and as such we worshiped him. and sad because we cannot be home for the funeral[3] But the system which dear old Gene has fought all his life compels us to remain at home & fight to keep bread & butter in the kiddie's mouth's. We trust dear Comrade that you will take up the work where Gene left off. I am confident you can & trust you will. Tho. Gene has gone he will never be forgotten. We have staged many meetings for the dear old Comrade in Terre Haute & West Terre Haute. & are still in the Battle for victory. But without Gene our battle is going to be a hard one. Our hearts go out to you dear comrade & to Mrs. Debs & all the relatives. God Bless you all

Mr. & Mrs. Earl V. Hankins
Hessville Ind.

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. The Hammond, Indiana, city directories for the 1920s and 1930s list Earl V. Hankins as a laborer, fireman, and foreman at the Standard Oil plant.

2. Debs died at Lindlahr Sanitarium on October 20, 1926.

3. Debs's funeral was held in Terre Haute on Saturday, October 23, 1926. The service, at which Norman Thomas delivered the eulogy, was attended by hundreds of labor and socialist leaders, writers, businessmen, and the Jimmy Higgenses and Jenny Higgenses who were, like Earl Hankins, the core of Debs's strength and support. Following cremation in Indianapolis, Debs's ashes were buried at Highland Lawn Cemetery in Terre Haute.

Morris Hillquit to Theodore Debs

October 20, 1926
New York City

THEODORE DEBS

IN COMMON WITH ALL SOCIALISTS I DEEPLY MOURN THE IRREPARABLE LOSS OF OUR GENE STOP HIS DEATH HAS TAKEN OUT OF OUR

MOVEMENT ITS GREATEST MORAL INSPIRATION AND SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE STOP MAY THE LOVING VENERATION OF HIS MEMORY BY MILLIONS OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE AND THEIR WARM SYMPATHY WITH YOU AND HIS BEREFT WIDOW SUSTAIN YOU BOTH IN YOUR GREAT GRIEF.

MORRIS HILLQUIT

Telegram (copy), WHi, Hillquit Papers.

Nicola Sacco to EVD

October 20, 1926
Boston, Massachusetts

My Dear Debs:—

The day of yesterday were so sad and gloomy, but this morning it seems more bright that ever; yes, it's so, because this morning just sooner I get up my eyes were turn toward the daylight, and upon the tops at the oak tree between the gold leaves, smillen, the old vegliant image of Eugene Debs in my eyes appear, and the affable smile of his noble face were telling me that he feel all better. Therefore, the appear of your dear image at my vision it was that, the guarder were telling me last night that their have read in the Boston newspaper that you were at the hospital badly sick. So this morning my first thought was to sent you these few lines, for I know that it will relief you noble soul. just as much as your unforgettable dearest letter they have and [one word illegible] to relieve my soul.

I am so really ashame to say to you, dear comrade, courage! But however, you will be good to let me tell you that, more the once in the struggle lifetime and even when a man were lying in bet saying the good old courage, win victoriously the depressed state body. Therefore, I am merely thout it—by remind your old intrepid good spirit, would revive the life in you; and I hope from the bottom of my heart So see you sooner image your old and the young brother comrades {again}, because they need the thought and the sincere radiant words from the sweet Voice of Euge Debs.

So—dear comrade, courage! because before were pass at the eternity world—I want see you, kiss you and so tight you in meni embrace warmly.

Best wishes to you dear wife—Theodore and all his family—from

all my dear household kiss from my little one join with most warmly and brotherly embrace

Won and forever your faithful comrade
Ferdinando N. Sacco

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

Victor and Meta Berger to Theodore Debs

October 21, 1926
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

THEODORE DEBS

OUR HEARTFIELT SYMPATHIES AND CONDOLENCE TO KATE AND YOU AND THE FAMILY PERIOD IF THERE IS ANYTHING WE CAN DO NOW OR AT ANY-TIME IN THE FUTURE PLEASE DO NOT HESITATE TO LET US KNOW

VICTOR BERGER AND META BERGER

Telegram, InTI, Debs Collection.

Jack Britt Gaerity to Theodore Debs

October 21, 1926
Portland, Oregon

Dear Theodore Debs:—

Mere words cannot express the depth of our compassion for you and Katherine Debs in this sad hour of bereavement, but Mrs. Gaerity and I wish to assure you that we share in your sorrow, for we both feel a deep and abiding sense of personal loss in the passing of our beloved Gene.

So long as life endures I shall carry in my heart an abiding love for Gene Debs, and to my dying day I shall always regret that the fates conspired to prevent me from seeing him and telling him why I never wrote to him. This is the reason: the last time I saw him, at Pittsburg in 1914, I was a physical wreck, a walking shadow, having been beaten to a pulp at Poughkeepsie, N.Y., in the fall of 1912 while speaking for the Socialist party. The movement is a soul-less thing at best, I had given it my youth and young manhood freely, gladly, but when I was wrecked I could crawl off out of sight to die like a wounded

animal. That, however, was far from being the attitude of Gene: he folded me to his bosom in the lobby of the Colonial Hotel and attempted to force me to accept $300 from him personally in order that I might go into the mountains and make a fight to recover my health. Of course I could not and would not accept the generous offer from your beloved brother. In the meantime life has been hard, often very hard, and we have lived from hand to mouth, and I did not want to burden Gene with my troubles.

I have not stood on the platform for years,[1] but I shall certainly pay my tribute of love to the memory of the dearest comrade in the American movement.

I know that you will be swamped with telegrams, cables and letters of condolence, please do not attempt to answer this hasty note.

Fraternally yours,
Jack Britt Gaerity

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. In 1919, Gaerity (1885-1944) moved to Portland, Oregon, where he worked for a chemical firm that employed him to translate German works on soil chemistry and to conduct experiments on soil minerals. *Portland Oregonian,* May 25, 1944.

A. H. Hawley[1] to Theodore Debs

October 21, 1926
Cleveland, Ohio

THEODORE DEBS

WITH THE PASSING OF YOUR BROTHER WHICH IS ANNOUNCED BY THE MORNING PAPERS DEPARTS THE LAST OF MY PREDECESSORS STOP SAYER ARNOLD CARTER DEBS[2] STOP I LOOK BACK ON OUR MANY YEARS OF ACQUAINTANCE WITH GREAT PLEASURE STOP MANY TIMES WHEN I WAS SERVEING AS AN OFFICER IN MY LOCAL LODGE HIS COUNSEL AND ADVICE WAS A GREAT HELP STOP TODAY I HAVE IN MY POSSESSION A SMALL TIN BOX THAT I PRIZE VERY HIGHLY WHICH HE FORWARDED TO ME SOME FEW YEARS AGO AND WHICH HE ADVISED WAS LARGE ENOUGH TO HOLD ALL THE POSTAGE STAMPS IN THE GRAND LODGE OFFICE WHEN HE ASSUMED THE DUTIES OF GRAND SECRETARY AND TREASURER STOP DAY BY DAY THINGS COME UP WHICH CALLS HIS NAME TO THE ATTENTION OF THOSE NOW EMPLOYED IN THE OFFICE WHERE HE SERVED SO EFFICIENTLY FOR MANY YEARS STOP IN HIS DEATH I FEEL THE LOSS OF A SINCERE AND TRUE FRIEND STOP KINDLY ACCEPT

FOR YOURSELF AND ALL MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY MY SINCERE AND TRUE SYMPATHY IN THE LOSS OF ONE WHOM WE ALL KNEW AS GENE

A H HAWLEY

Telegram, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Albert Henry Hawley (1866-1931) was general secretary-treasurer of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Engineers from 1909 until his death.

2. William N. Sayre was Debs's predecessor and Frank Arnold and W. S. Carter his successors, as secretary-treasurer of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Engineers.

Louis Leon Ludlow[1] to Katherine Metzel Debs

October 21, 1926
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mrs. Debs:

In the death of your husband the world has lost one of its greatest humanitarians. His beneficent influence did not cease when the Gates swung open to him, but the inspiration of his example will abide wherever there are hungry to be fed and sick to be comforted, and wherever greed demands that God's worthy poor be offered as a sacrifice on the altar of oppression.

I had known him for more than thirty years, and I never ceased to admire him for his human impulses, his unbounded sympathies and his great, loving heart. He was a leader among men, but he was more—he was a real friend, and that is the most and the best that can be said of any man. He was a friend not only when the birds sang and the flowers bloomed, and soft winds caressed one's brow most soothingly, but he was a friend, even more, in storm and stress, and in the darkness of the night, and I guess that is the reason why so many people loved him.

Very sincerely and respectfully yours,
Louis Ludlow.

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. Louis Leon Ludlow (1873-1950) was an Indianapolis newspaperman and Washington correspondent for Indiana and Ohio newspapers before his election to Congress in 1928. Ludlow served as a Democratic congressman from Indiana from 1929 to 1949 and was perhaps best known for the proposed Ludlow Amendment, which called for a war referendum before a declaration of war.

Claude G. Bowers to Theodore Debs

October 22, 1926
New York City

THEODORE DEBS

WE HAVE ALL LOST A FRIEND YOUR BROTHER HAD THE MOST LOVABLE WINSOME AND BRILLIANT PERSONALITY I HAVE KNOWN AND HIS GREAT HEART BEAT IN TENDER SYMPATHY WITH THE POOR AND UNFORTUNATE THE WORLD IS POORER IN HIS PASSING

CLAUDE G BOWERS

Telegram, InTI, Debs Collection.

John Haynes Holmes to Theodore Debs

October 22, 1926
New York City

Dear Mr. Debs:

The death of your brother has come as a terrible shock even though the newspapers gave us warning that he was approaching his end. I am grieving as though I had lost a lifelong friend, for your brother had the gift of love which bound the heart. An added grief springs from the fact that I have found it quite impossible to come to speak at the funeral service tomorrow. That you want me I count one of the greatest honors of my life, and I shall treasure this invitation of the family and the Socialist Party as one of my most precious memories. We could find no way, however, of my getting back here to my church in time for my Sunday service, from which I could not be absent. I am finding comfort in the thought, however, that I am using this service as a public memorial to your brother. I shall take his life as my text, use his writings for Scripture reading, and place in the pulpit a full-sized copy of Louis Mayer's bust, draped with the Red flag. Furthermore, my being in the city makes it possible for me to speak at the Madison Square Garden Mass Meeting on Sunday afternoon.[1] As a final tribute to your brother I am already arranging a special Memorial Number of Unity.[2] I wonder if you can send me some picture of your brother whch I can print on the cover page of the magazine.

There is nothing that I can add to the praise which has been bestowed upon your brother for years past by all who have known

and loved him. As an American he is one of two or three[3] who have understood the true genius of our democracy and have lived it with the fidelity of a martyr and a saint. How his name will shine in the days to come.

I wish that I could give you some personal comfort for the great sorrow that you are now suffering. I am certain, however, that you must find sweet and lasting consolation in the thought of your perfect devotion to Gene through all these years. Your love for him was as the love of ten and I feel sure that it helped more than anything else to keep him alive in these last years of suffering and weakness. Please remember me to Mrs. Debs and convey to her this assurance of my deepest sympathy. There is no lovelier chapter in your brother's life than that of his marriage and home which Mrs. Debs glorified by her love for him.

Very sincerely yours,
John Haynes Holmes

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

1. The memorial service for Debs at Madison Square Garden on October 24, 1926, is described in detail in *New Leader,* October 30, 1926.

2. The December 6, 1926, issue of *Unity,* edited by Holmes, was given over largely to reminiscences of Debs written by Louis Mayer, Margaret Sanger, and others. Holmes's "Debs—Lover of Men" appeared in the November 15, 1926, issue of *Unity.*

3. In "Debs—Lover of Men," Holmes wrote: "I know of no man in American history, save only Abraham Lincoln, of whom the legends are so many and so lovely."

Nicola Sacco to Theodore Debs

October 22, 1926
Dedham, Massachusetts

Dear Theodore:—

You can so well imagine how badly I felt when I heard the death news of your and the brother and comrade of all the workers class, the father and the friendship of the children, it was worse and a thunder stormy that pass above my heart. I know that it is our fate and the struggle of lifetime that one after another we all got to die, but the death of this taught master, the statuor of this grand American socialist, the giant oak of this faithful idealiste it is a great lost for all the humanity. I would if I could describe you all the pain I feel for the lost of this martyr of idea, but it seems that all my ideas, all mine homble expression words they dying in my brain; But—Whatever, I

want that these few lines reach at yours in these sadness day, so I could write with you and join together with the painful that the lost companionship of the poor old dear mother of Mrs. Debs have brought for he, with surely short it would comfort her and all yours dear household.

Meanwhile—best Wishes to all of your warm kisses to Mrs Debs from my little ones from all my dear household join with the bet fraternal and brotherly embrace.

Your sincerely
Nicola Sacco

ALS, InTI, Debs Collection.

Herman Rahm to Theodore Debs and Katherine Metzel Debs

October 23, 1926
Staunton, Illinois

Dear Comrade,

At the meeting of the Socialist Party Local of Staunton held on Oct 23, I was delegated to send you the simpity of the Local. You have our simpity in the loss of your kind and loving Brother and fathfull husband. What a pitie this noble heart should be called to the great silence. It is impossible for me to find words to express our heart felt sorrow, for Comrade Debs was so well known here and liked that we thought him on of us. Dear Comrade our hearts are with you and we share your bereavement, as his soul goes marching and radiates with the passing years.

With simpithy and Love I Remain First Yours
Herman Rahm Secty S. P.
Staunton, Ill

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Clarence A. Royse to Theodore Debs

October 23, 1926
Terre Haute, Indiana

My dear Theodore;

This is just a note to express my deep sympathy in the loss of your great brother. He was beyond question a great man and I felt for him

a genuine admiration and real affection and in his going I feel a sense of loss shared by uncounted thousands. This is none the less true because I was unable to follow or agree with him. That was the last thing he required of a friend. I know of no other man in my generation who has equalled him in the utter sincerity of his devotion to his beliefs and ideals and the improvement of the lot of all mankind.

Please give to Mrs. Debs the assurance of my most sincere sympathy. My heart goes out to her again in this hour of sorrow & love.

Very Sincerely
Clarence A. Royse

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Stephen Marion Reynolds to Theodore Debs

October 24, 1926
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Theodore

My Love is with you. No one knows better than I how close you and Gene were to each other and I have been close to both of you all the years I have known you. I was sorry I was not able to see you. I did know however that you would let me know if there was anything I could do for him. I was away when he passed on. Dear Gene. You know how I loved him and he had such a perfect faith in Immortality and we shall be with him again. Will you convey to Katherine my Love and assurances.

I am enclosing a letter from a Dear Friend and Comrade who had the highest regard for Gene's Brave Soul

Lovingly Yours Always
Stephen M. Reynolds

Marian now lives in Rosario Argentina & I have written her She loved Gene and Katherine absolutely.

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Ruth Crawford[1] to Theodore Debs

October 25, 1926
[Terre Haute, Indiana]

My dear Mr. Debs,

It is hard to know that one no longer can have one's faith restored by talking to 'Gene. Yet it must be good to know that your brother left behind such a memory that those who ever knew him will be ashamed, because of the life he led, to ever doubt but that somehow good will be our destined end or way.

Will you please offer my sympathy to Mrs. Debs? You have been a splendid brother to Gene, and played your part well in helping him carry on his great work.

Sincerely,
Ruth Crawford

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1. Ruth Crawford was a young reporter for the *Terre Haute Saturday Spectator* who conducted one of the last interviews of Debs. Her account of the interview, "Debs Dreams On" (*New Leader*, July 24, 1926), compared Debs with Walt Whitman and Abraham Lincoln and reported Debs's confidence that his "dream of the brotherhood of man [would] come true."

J. H. Hollingsworth to Theodore Debs

October 25, 1926
Bradenton, Florida

My dear Theodore:

The world seems terribly empty. Where is there another just like 'Gene? They cannot be found. Who is there to stand up and fearlessly rebuke the wrongs of this country and of the world as did he? Such sublime courage as his is mighty scarce. Truly, a great, generous, noble, and courageous soul has left us. The sordid world that traduced him when he was with us, will now do him homage when [he] is gone. Like Lincoln, his fame will increase with the passing years. His marvellous life of activity and self-sacrifice shames and rebukes my own comparatively inactive and self-coddling life. If good works count for anything in the other life, he will certainly stand in the highest ranks. I cant help but believe that SOMEWHERE and sometime he will be

fully rewarded for all the good he has done and for all he so nobly and heroically endured.

To you, dear Theodore, my whole heart goes out in loving sympathy. I know that upon you the stroke has fallen with tremendous weight. How I long to help you carry your burden! Your pain, is my pain; your tears my tears, your sufferings my sufferings. Not an hour of these days passes that you are out of my mind, and heart. Tho absent from you in body, I am with you in spirit. To you, a silent and unseen worker, may be attributed much of 'Gene's usefulness. He could not have accomplished the great work he did without your faithful and highly efficient labor. You have fought many battles and have suffered and endured much, and thro it all you have ever shown a true and brave spirit. You will be just as brave now to face this great bereavement that has befallen you. My heart's desire is that you may retain health and strength to continue your important work.

Please convey my best wishes to your estimable wife and daughter. With all my heart I wish you and your's well in all things and at all times.

Affectionally.
J. H. Hollingsworth

TLS, InTI, Debs Collection.

Mary Donovan to Theodore Debs

October-November 1926
Boston, Massachusetts

Dear Comrade Debs:

In reading the Appeal I did not notice any mention of flowers sent from Sacco and Vanzetti. I telegraphed them on Friday to Terre Haute—thirty American Beauty roses. I am asking about them, only because I had the responsibility of sending them and because of Vanzetti's anxiety that they should be sent. Did you receive the telegrams—one the night before Gene died and one the day following? We sent them to Elmhurst Sanatorium, Chicago. I only want you to know that we, the Committee,[1] as well as Sacco and Vanzetti, per-

sonally, are not such ingrates that we would not remember the most loyal friend we ever had. I am sure you will understand why I write.

You all have our deepest sympathy and sincerest love.

Fraternally,
Mary Donovan.
for the Committee

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1. The Sacco-Vanzetti Defense Committee.

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